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Diplomatic Developments; Shevardnadze Tour

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir confirmed that Foreign Minister Moshe Arens is scheduled to meet with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in Cairo 22 February, telling Jerusalem radio that he hopes the meeting will mark a "new stage in rapprochement with the Soviet Union." Jerusalem radio's Arabic service had earlier noted "Israeli optimism" about Shevardnadze's tour, saying this stems from indications that the USSR is sincerely interested in promoting peace and from the fact that the Arens-Shevardnadze meeting was arranged in accordance with a Soviet initiative. Meanwhile, a Soviet diplomat cited by Jerusalem radio said the USSR is no longer setting conditions for the renewal of diplomatic relations, though he added there must a change in the atmosphere.

Reporting on Arens' 20 February meeting with President Husni Mubarak in Cairo, IDF radio noted that no agreement was reached on the two main issues which they discussed: the international conference and PLO participation in negotiations. An Egyptian source cited by Jerusalem radio said the Egyptian leadership told Arens Israel must "seriously study" the Algiers PNC resolutions, stressing that now is the best time to exploit the opportunity to make progress in the peace process.

On his arrival in Syria 17 February, Shevardnadze likewise emphasized that the present time is "more appropriate for finding solutions to the Middle East issue than previously," according to Damascus radio. In remarks in the Syrian capital carried by TASS, he spoke of the need to make "serious preparations" for an international conference, adding that such preparations could take place within the UN Security Council, through consultations among the five permanent members of the Council, and by bringing into play the peace-making potential of the UN secretary general. He said it would be possible to set a "time limit" for this preparatory stage, noting that "a period of no more than 9 months is being talked about." He also called for joint meetings between Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and the PLO and stressed the importance of strengthening Syrian-Palestinian relations.

Regarding Soviet-Syrian relations, Shevardnadze referred to Syria as the USSR's "leading partner in the Near East," adding that the Soviet Union would like to "preserve this status," according to TASS. Damascus television broadcast a joint communique on the talks which noted that Shevardnadze held talks with President Hafiz al-Asad and gave the Syrian leader a message from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Shevardnadze also met with Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and both sides expressed satisfaction with the "successful, escalating growth" of bilateral relations. According to SANA, Shevardnadze noted that the promotion of Syrian-Soviet military cooperation was among the topics discussed.

Shevardnadze subsequently met with Jordan's King Husayn in Amman, telling journalists afterward that the talks were "very useful and constructive," according to Amman radio. In remarks reported by Cairo after a 20 February meeting with Egyptian President Mubarak, the Soviet foreign minister said that Soviet-Egyptian relations are developing in a "dynamic and stable manner," with both sides seeking to strengthen and normalize relations.

Shevardnadze noted that he gave Mubarak a message from Gorbachev containing Soviet ideas on international and regional issues, including some "important concepts" concerning the attainment of peace in the Middle East. The talks with Mubarak were "useful" he said and there are "no differences" between the Egyptian and Soviet positions on the issue of a peace settlement. In a banquet speech cited by MENA, he said his talks in Damascus, Amman, and Cairo had shown there is no more important task than reaching a comprehensive settlement and that the Arab leaders are looking for a peaceful solution.

Iran

Rushdie Controversy—Iran has recalled its ambassadors from the EEC countries, IRNA announced 21 February. The move is in response to the earlier decision by Britain and the EEC countries to recall their diplomats from Tehran. Tehran's ulema had earlier called on the Foreign Ministry to sever relations with Britain "as soon as possible" and asked world Muslims to "do all within their power" to carry out Khomeyni's fatwah calling for the execution of Salman Rushdie, IRNA reported. Nevertheless, Tehran television maintained that the withdrawal of British diplomats "did not constitute a break in diplomatic ties," according to AFP.

The British decision followed Ayatollah Khomeyni's second statement on the affair, reported by IRNA, in which he denied that Rushdie would be forgiven if he repented and declared that "even if Rushdie repents, it is incumbent on every Muslim to send him to hell." Rushdie's "apology" for the distress caused to Muslims by his book "The Satanic Verses" was described by IRNA as "falling well short" of a public repentance. The agency also printed the "full text" of Rushdie's apology. Although one IRNA report concluded that Rushdie's apology was "sufficient" to warrant his pardon, the agency later declared that these remarks were merely the "personal observation" of the copywriter.

Foreign Loans Issue—In remarks broadcast by Tehran television 17 February during a stopover in Tabriz on his way home from talks in Turkey, Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi rejected the possibility of foreign loans to finance Iran's post-war reconstruction and added that reliance on foreign loans would be to look for "quick results at the cost of the country's independence." Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri also commented on the subject of foreign loans during a meeting with bazaar traders in Qom, according to IRNA. He rejected the idea of seeking foreign loans and declared that the government should instead seek help from the people and "eliminate harsh restrictions and administrative restrictions."

Amnesty—A second group of former members of "counterrevolutionary grouplets" was released in Khorramabad and Bushehr 20 February under Ayatollah Khomeyni's 8 February general amnesty, IRNA reported.

Afghanistan

Declaration of Emergency—President Najibullah declared a state of emergency in the country in a decree broadcast by Kabul radio 18 February. The decree declares that the state of emergency is necessary in view of the "serious dangers" posed to the country's political independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity. In a speech to the nation broadcast by the radio the following day, Najibullah explained the need to declare a state of emergency. He appealed to all sectors of the Afghan nation to work for national reconciliation and asked all party members to join the armed forces.

A decree broadcast by Kabul radio 19 February announced the formation of a Supreme Defense Council headed by Najibullah. During the Council's first meeting the same day, Najibullah declared that the country's Armed Forces "bravely protect" the "free and ancient land," Kabul radio added.

Prime Minister Mohammad Hassan Sharq was "dismissed" from his post, according to "official sources" cited by AFP. This has not been confirmed or denied by monitored official Afghan sources.

Military Situation—Additional troops were deployed on the streets of Kabul following the declaration of a state of emergency and the mujahidin have completely "liberated" Oruzgan Province, Islamabad radio reported. According to AFP, the mujahidin have asked the residents of Kabul to evacuate the areas around military installations and Kabul Airport and are preparing for a "final assault" on the city.

On the other hand, internal disagreements and clashes continue between the various mujahidin groups, Kabul radio reported. The radio said 97 members of the Rabbani group were killed and 60 injured in a clash with the Gulbuddin group in Takhar Province. More than 53 "extremists" were killed in recent military operations by the Afghan Army in Parvan, Nangarhar, and other provinces, according to Kabul radio reports.

Mujahidin Politics—The mujahidin shura in Islamabad continues to demonstrate "conflicts of opinion" over the appointment of members of the interim government, IRNA reported. Only four of the seven mujahidin groups based in Pakistan have offered candidates for ministerial posts, the agency noted. "Moderates" among the mujahidin earlier opposed the appointment of Ahmad Shah and the distribution of cabinet posts, AFP reported. The shura has formed a commission to devise a formula for an interim government, Islamabad radio reported. According to AFP, the commission has been authorized to suggest whatever changes it deems necessary to "maintain unity" among the mujahidin.

Soviet View—Yuliy Vorontsov, USSR first deputy foreign minister, warned Pakistan about the concentration of its troops around Jalalabad, Moscow radio reported. At a news conference in New Delhi 17 February, Vorontsov declared that the USSR "would not remain indifferent" to threats to Afghanistan's independence or to a "bloodbath" in the country, AFP reported. At a news conference in Moscow the same day, A. A. Bessmertnykh, USSR first deputy foreign minister, warned that Islamabad continues to "hatch" plans for a Pakistan-Afghanistan confederation, Moscow radio noted. He said attempts are being made to "install" in Kabul people who would "trade Afghanistan" for the right to rule the country.

Israel

Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin blamed the PLO for the murder of an IDF soldier in Jerusalem 18 February and for the kidnapping of another soldier in southern Israel, IDF radio reported. He viewed both incidents as classic examples of terrorist attacks. Sources in Prime Minister Shamir's office claimed that the killing of the soldier in Jerusalem resulted from the recent talks between Labor politicians and Palestinian activist Faysal al-Husayni, THE JERUSALEM POST noted. Al-Husayni denounced both the killing of the soldier and the IDF's "killing actions" against Palestinians in the territories, Jerusalem radio reported. According to the POST, he told an audience in Tel Aviv that "nothing can damage the prospects for peace more than these sorts of acts." Al-Husayni also said that a Palestinian state need not have an army if there are "international guarantees" for its integrity.

In the territories, a Palestinian youth was killed and five others wounded in a 17 February clash with IDF soldiers near Nabulus, Jerusalem radio reported. A teenager died of wounds received in an earlier clash in the Gaza Strip. At least 18 other Palestinians were wounded in disturbances 18-20 February, according to reports by Israeli radio stations and THE JERUSALEM POST. Jerusalem radio reported that a number of Palestinian journalists were placed under administrative detention.

PLO Affairs

Alleged Talks With Israel—In reaction to remarks made by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in an interview with CBS television, Israeli Defense Minister Rabin denied that either "direct or indirect" talks are being held with the PLO, Jerusalem radio reported. According to the clandestine Al-Quds Palestinian Arab radio, 'Arafat revealed that his talks with Israel concerned a truce in southern Lebanon and a "common market" comprising Israel, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon. The PFLP, the PFLP-GC, and other Palestinian groups denounced 'Arafat's remarks, the radio reported.

Dialogue With United States—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, affirmed that "contacts" are under way to resume the dialogue with the United States, although the latter "must change its bias toward

Israel" if peace is to be achieved in the Middle East, WAKH reported. However, PLO Executive Committee member 'Abdallah Hurani described recent contacts between Palestinian officials and U.S. Congressmen as "merely exploratory," Dubayy's AL-BAYAN newspaper reported 15 February.

Lebanon

A 20 February meeting between Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn and Lebanese Forces (LF) commander Samir Ja'ja' was a "major positive step" toward a relaxation of tension in the eastern area, Voice of Lebanon radio reported. Ja'ja' told the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon that the talks were "positive" and resulted in an agreement to repudiate all acts of violence between the Army and the LF. In remarks broadcast by the Voice of Lebanon earlier, Ja'ja' expressed readiness to place the military wing of the LF "at the disposal" of the Lebanese Army so that the two sides can work together to "liberate Lebanon from the Syrians." However, he said it would be "out of the question" to expect the LF to evacuate East Beirut or other areas unless this is part of a wider security plan providing for the unification of all Beirut under the Lebanese Army and the withdrawal of Syrian forces and all militias.

On the origins of the recent fighting, Ja'ja' denied Gen 'Awn's claims that the LF started the conflict in an attempt to seize power. Noting that he was abroad when the violence started, Ja'ja' said the fighting was "very regrettable and totally crazy" as there is "nothing that warrants conflict or military confrontation" in East Beirut.

A Beirut radio report on the situation in East Beirut over the weekend described the cease-fire as "fragile," noting that the LF and Army engaged in "reciprocal kidnapping operations." According to the radio, Gen 'Awn is demanding that the LF end its military role in East Beirut, hand over illegal ports, and stop collecting taxes. A news agency report cited by Voice of National Resistance radio stated that 77 people were killed and over 200 injured in the recent LF-Army conflict. The clandestine Voice of the Mountain radio noted that employees of the U.S. Embassy in East Beirut were evacuated to Cyprus because of the security situation in the area.

Arab Cooperation Council

The founder-members of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) agreed to set up a unified rapid deployment force to counter possible "foreign aggression" against any ACC member, Kuwait's AL-QABAS newspaper reported. Iran's ETTELA'AT daily described the formation of the ACC as a "sinister plot" aimed at "isolating Syria" and opposing Iran's economic and military power, IRNA reported.

Maghreb Summit

A treaty on the establishment of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) was signed in Marrakech, Morocco, 18 February, MAP reported. The treaty provides for the setting up of a presidential council, a foreign ministerial council, and other bodies including a general secretariat to guide the AMU, the agency noted. Rabat television broadcast the "text" of the summit meeting's final communique which notes the need for Maghreb solidarity in view of the transformations and changes in the world. The communique, signed by the heads of state of Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, and Mauritania, also notes the formation of the AMU as an "integrated group" acting for cooperation, international dialogue, peace, and security.

Western Sahara

The Polisario Front threatened to resume military action in Western Sahara if Morocco refuses to resume its dialogue with the front "before the end of this month," Algiers radio reported. An official of the front told a Rome news conference 18 February that the dialogue began "without conditions" and must resume on the same basis, the radio added.

Sudan

Visit by Libya's Jabir—President Ahmad al-Mirghani and other Sudanese leaders received Libya's Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir 19 February, JANA reported. At a news conference the same day reported by Omdurman radio, Jabir said the two sides discussed Libyan-Sudanese relations, bilateral cooperation, and Arab issues. Jabir also met with Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, SUNA reported.

Southern Military Situation—The SPLA forces are "tightening" the siege of Torit and are advancing on other government-held garrisons in the south, the clandestine radio SPLA noted in reports broadcast over the weekend. The rebels also claimed to have destroyed a "brigade-sized" convoy which was trying to relieve Torit and to have "heavily shelled" the town of Juba.

Iran-Iraq Negotiations

The first session of the joint military working group on matters concerning the cease-fire between Iran and Iraq has been scheduled for 22 February, INA reported. The group is to meet at a site along the Khanaqin-Qasr-e Shirin road in the central border area. In a related development, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz's claim that his country is not occupying Iranian territory was rebutted by an Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman cited by IRNA. The spokesman said that not only has Iraq not retreated from Iranian territory but it has occupied more than 100 square km of territory since the cease-fire took effect. The agency said 'Aziz's remarks contradict an earlier admission at the United Nations that Iraqi troops are still in parts of Iranian territory.

A group of 83 Iraqi POW's were flown home 21 February and another 177 are expected to leave shortly, IRNA reported.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Ban Urged on Distribution of 'Satanic Verses'

NC1802130889 Paris AFP in English 1250 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Feb 18 (AFP)—The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) urged its 45 member countries Saturday to ban distribution of British author Salman Rushdie's controversial novel "The Satanic Verses."

OIC Secretary General Hamid al-Qabid, in a communique issued here, also appealed "to the sense of responsibility of the publishers not to participate in the publication and distribution of a work that outrages more than a billion Moslems around the world."

The communique made no reference to the death sentence issued against Mr. Rushdie by Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni, who accused the Indian-born author of blaspheming the Prophet Muhammad.

But Mr. al-Qabid said "the condemnation of this blasphemous work by Moslems comes neither from hysteria nor barbarism, but rather from a deep and painful wound to their faith."

He urged the 45 OIC members to "ban the distribution of the work as well as any periodical carrying it...and to boycott the publishing houses that would participate in its publication."

Many Islamic countries, including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, have already banned the book.

"Islam has shown, across the ages, an extraordinary capacity for openness, assimilation and synthesis, which allowed it to make an eminent contribution to the progress of mankind," the communique said.

But the "liberty of thought, expression and creation" supported by islam necessarily carry an "obligation to respect the fundamental values of each society," an obligation that Mr. Rushdie has refused to accept, the communique said.

Reportage on Maghreb Summit Events in Morroco

Ben Ali Addresses Summit

LD1702180189 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 1354 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, Your Majesty, brothers: Allow me at the start of this speech, which I have the honor of delivering in your name at the end of this historic Maghreb summit, to extend to His Majesty our brother King Hassan II, and to the whole fraternal Moroccan people, and to our brothers in Marrakech in particular, most sincere gratitude and thanks for the hospitality with which they showered us, and for the favorable conditions they provided for the success of our work.

This is not strange coming from his majesty and his noble people, the people who yesterday waged the revolution of liberation under the leadership of the late Mohammed V, which was indeed a revolution of the king and people, and which continues today the march of development and the achievement of strength under the leadership of the best heir, His Majesty our brother Hassan II.

Dear brothers, our gathering was historic owing to the satisfactory and encouraging results that emanated from it. What we agreed upon today here in Marrakech, the capital of the unifiers, represents a decisive phase in detente and cooperation between our peoples and a serious starting point which, for the first time, places our countries on the path of building a sound Maghreb. From the Tangier summit to the turning point represented in our meeting in fraternal Algeria last June, the building of a sound Maghreb always constituted a dream of our peoples.

Thanks to a mutual determination and sincere will, we have in fact been able to declare the setting up of a union of the greater Arab Maghreb. This declaration in itself represents a core political choice whose features became clear in the agreement that defines the legal and institutional framework for unified Maghreb action. Such action could begin soon, especially following our decision to ratify the practical proposals put forward by the specialized ministerial committees.

In aggregate, these proposals constitute an executive plan for cooperation and integration between us in various fields, on the path to the establishment of Maghreb unity. We consider this latter unity a step on the path of achieving total Arab unity. It serves the causes of Arab unity and the cause of the fighting Palestinian people. It is a good omen that while taking this step today, brothers of ours in the Arab Mashriq [East] are agreeing on setting up a framework of cooperation between them, one similar to the cooperation council begun by our brothers in the Arab Gulf several years ago.

Inasmuch as we take as a good omen and admire all these efforts, duty calls on us to assert that no matter how generous and ambitious texts and intentions are, their implementation in reality still depends on the extent of our determination and eagerness to follow up their implementation and accomplishment, and providing the conditions suitable to this, so every step we take becomes a brick consolidating the previous ones and a cause for speeding up the following steps until the edification, with God's will and help, of an Arab Maghreb with no borders which guarantees for our countries and coming generations strength and survival in a world dominated by challenges in various forms and shapes and in which economic blocs that threaten our interests in the present and the future have emerged.

Brothers, our responsibility toward our peoples is great. Yes, our responsibility is great. If we all have the honor of reviving their hopes for a unified Arab Maghreb by laying down the political and legal groundwork necessary for this, we have no right to disappoint these hopes at the level of implementation and accomplishment. Also, our people, especially youths, should be at the level of this fateful event, by making the edification of the Arab Maghreb an ideal for the sake of which all vital forces enlist and all efforts are exerted, like they enlisted yesterday for the achievement of independence and freedom, and succeeded in this thanks to patience, determination and adherence to principles.

Hold fast, all together, by the rope God stretches out for you, and be not divided among yourselves. God spoke the truth. God's peace, mercy and blessing be upon you. [applause]

Algerian Minister Comments

LD1802005689 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Excerpts] Algerian Foreign Minister Boualem Bessaieh, in a news conference in Marrakech today, highlighted the strong presence of Algeria in this historical summit and the important positive results derived from it.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Your Excellency, can you give us an idea about the treaty which was signed a few moments earlier and which contains the declaration of the union of the Great Arab Maghreb.

[Bessaieh] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, thank you. First of all, before talking about the results of this summit, it is necessary to go back a bit. You remember that a Maghreban summit was held in Zeralda after the Arab summit, which played a decisive role in clearing the atmosphere between the Arab brothers, resulted in political developments which you have undoubtedly followed, and was positive. [passage omitted]

Consultations and meetings have continued and committees have been convening up until the announcement of a second Maghreban summit in Marrakech.

Before I deal with these results, it is necessary to mention some observations. The first observation is that when we study the international economic map, particularly when we devote our research to some continents such as the Asian, African, and even the European continents, we notice that the Arab Maghreb region did not rush toward an economic grouping or block, despite the huge potentialities it has. From this premise we noticed also that whenever there is a delay in trying to bring together all the huge powers and great potentialities available to the Arab Maghreb, the price to be paid is high. Thus, it is high time we build our Maghreb, knowing that it requires common efforts and a long time. I am not saying that because it is not possible to start today but I say out of modesty and pragmatism that we must think that the future generations, in other words our sons and our grandsons, will benefit from all these efforts. Now I go back to the results of this summit. As you know, a few moments ago the heads of state signed three documents. The first one is the final communique which comprises some of the main civilizational, historical, cultural, social, linguistic, and religious ideas and principles which would enable us to meet the necessary conditions for the building of the Maghreb edifice. We also consider this communique a certificate for the political birth of the Maghreb.

The second document, i.e. the treaty, can be considered a certificate for the legal birth of this Maghreb. As for the third document, it is a resolution comprising future programs of action. It is considered a certificate of economic, cultural, and social birth. We should remember that all this aimed at forming a new Maghreb man who will be in the future capable of having the same thinking, the same logic and the same language.

I can say that in the methodology we have taken into consideration two elements: First, we must make steps that are perhaps slow but consistent—given that any haste would lead us to some sort of disarray—and that consolidate ideas and objectives. Second, we thought that there had to be a studied plan containing reasonable stages in reasonable deadlines so as to avoid disappointment to our people, because the idea of building the Arab Maghreb was not born today but it has been the dream of generations for almost half a century. Youth have been dreaming about an Arab Maghreb and stressing the need for building this Arab Maghreb for the good of our peoples.

In the last phase, you saw Algeria's movement at the highest level. President Chadli Bendjedid personally travelled from Algeria to Ifrane, then from Algeria to Tripoli, then from Tripoli to Tunisia, then there were telephone contacts and contacts with fraternal Mauritania. The fact is that as Algeria—president, government, and people—we believe in this greater Arab Maghreb. I believe that the basic idea over which the presidents agreed today was that when we build our Maghreb we do not want to go into seclusion. We must be open to dialogue with other groups, not only the blocs to the north. There must also be a fraternal gesture toward the south, so that this project may remain open to our Arab and African brothers in a climate which reigns quietly, with mutual respect and common interest. Thank you. [end recording]

Summit Issues 'Final Communique'

LD1702190989 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text of final communique adopted at the Maghreb summit in Marrakech on 17 February—read by unidentified official]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, the creation of the Arab Maghreb Union is declared. HM King Hassan II, monarch of the Kingdom of Morocco; HE Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, president of the Tunisian Republic; HE Chadli Bendjedid, president of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria; Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the great 1 September Revolution and the Great Socialist Libyan Arab People's Jamahiriyah; and HE Colonel Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, chairman of the Military Committee for National Salvation and head of state of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

From the premise of the unity of religion, language, and history that binds our peoples, and the unity of aspirations and expectations, inspired by the glories of our forefathers who have contributed to the radiation of the Islamic Arab civilization and the enriching of a cultural and ideological rennaissance which served as the best support for the common struggle for freedom and dignity;

In an embodiment of our common desire that we expressed at the Zeralda Summit, which constituted a new starting point for the search for the best means leading to the edification of the Arab Maghreb;

Out of our awarness that the realization of our people's hopes through the aspirations of such a unity requires an additional mobilization of efforts and the establishment of effective cooperation between our countries as well as continuous integration in all spheres;

In view of the transformations and the ties and integrations under way at the international level as well as the challenges facing our peoples and our countries in the political, economic, cultural, and social fields in general, we are required to achieve more intersolidarity and support and exert more effort in order to attain the sought after goal;

In view of our awareness of the dire need that our countries cooperate in all fields as well as the need to fully coordinate our policies, our stances, and our economic and social choices;

Given the fact that our grouping will make our region a place for peace and security a matter which will allow it to contribute further to strengthening the bonds of international cooperation and peace;

In announcing our firm will to provide the bases of justice and dignity for our peoples as well as consecrating individual and collective rights in our countries inspired by our civilized noble descent and our spiritual values; And in following the path taken by the rest of the projects for regional groupings throughout the world which were rationally planned and were achieved through firm and unhurried steps;

With respect to the human, natural, and strategic possibilities which the countries of the Arab Maghreb are endowed with, which qualify them to face up to these challenges, and to handle expected developments in future decades;

Out of our faith that a unified Arab Maghreb constitutes a fundamental phase on the path toward Arab unity;

Out of our belief that the establishment of the union of the Arab Maghreb will consolidate the struggle of the Palestinian Arab people for the liberation and the recovery of the entirety of their firm national rights;

Out of our conviction that a developed Maghreb entity will enable our states to consolidate joint action with the rest of the brotherly African states for the development and prosperity of our African Continent;

With respect to the fact that the union of the Arab Maghreb is the ideal framework for the realization of the will of our peoples to strengthen bonds with all the friendly peoples, and to support the international organizations and groupings to which our states belong;

Due to the fact that the edification of international cooperation and the support of international peace compel the establishment of regional unions to serve as a framework for reinforcing and consolidating their edifice;

In response to the aspirations of our peoples, out of awareness of the sensitivity of the current period, and out of our consciousness of the historical responsibility laid on our shoulders;

While we stress our attachment to our spiritual values and our historical authenticity, our openness toward others, and our attachment to the principles of international morality;

We announce, with God's help and on behalf of our peoples, the creation of the union of the Arab Maghreb, as an integrated group, based on a single will, cooperating with its regional counterparts, and as a compact bloc to contribute to enriching international dialogue, determined to support the principles of good, and mobilizing its peoples with the possiblities it is endowed with in order to consolidate the independence of the countries of the union of Arab Maghreb, to preserve their gains, and to work with the international community in order to set up a world system where justice, dignity, freedom, and human rights prevail, and whose relations are characterized by sincere cooperation and mutual respect.

In accomplishment of these objectives, we concluded an agreement which specifies the principles and aims of this union and establishes bodies and institutions for it.

[Signed] Written in the city of Marrakech on this blessed Friday, 10 [date as heard] Rajab 1409 AH, corresponding to 17 February 1989 AD, King Hassan II on behalf of the Kingdom of Morocco, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali on behalf of the Tunisian Republic, Chadli Bendjedid on behalf of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria, Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi on behalf of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Republic [Al-Qadhdhafi intervenes to correct the announcer]—on behalf of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

Union Treaty Signed

LD1802153789 Rabat MAP in English 1250 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Marrakech, Feb. 18, (MAP)—The treaty of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) signed here Friday contains a score of articles which provides the union with a number of instances, namely the Presidential Council, the Highest Instance, a Foreign Ministerial Council, a Consultative Council, a Legal Instance, a follow-up Committee and a General Secretary.

The Marrkech Treaty is aimed at consolidating friendly ties between member countries, achieving progress, prosperity and defending the rights of its member countries and progressively ensuring the freedom of movement of goods, persons and capitals among them.

The treaty provides for a close cooperation between member countries in diplomatic fields, privileging dialogue, to safeguard their independence.

The five states made a commitment to allow on their territories no activity harming the security, the territorial integrity and the political system of any member state, or to adhere to any pact or military coalition which would threaten the political independence or territorial integrity of member states.

The AMU is open, as stipulated by the treaty, to any Arab or African state which desires to adhere to the union with the agreement of member states.

The treaty also provides for the ensuring of economic, industrial, agricultural, trade and social development through joint projects.

Regarding the cultural sector, the Marrakech Treaty aims at boosting cooperation to upgrade education and teaching on different levels, preserve spiritual and moral values in pursuance of Islamic precepts as well as safeguard Arab identity.

The treaty also stipulates that the highest instance of the AMU will be the Presidential Council composed of the heads of state of member countries. The Presidential Council will hold its session every six months, but emergency sessions could be held when needed. All the council's decisions are taken by consensus. Also the prime ministers of the Maghreban countries can convene whenever they see it necessary.

The AMU will also have a ministerial council of foreign ministers who will attend the meetings of the Presidential Council and debate the conclusions of the follow up committee and specialized ministerial commissions.

The treaty indicates that the AMU is endowed with a General Secretariat comprising representatives from every member country. It also indicates that the union will have a consultative instance composed of ten representatives from legislative institutions of every one of the member countries.

The Maghreban Union will have a legal body formed by two judges from every country.

The treaty stipulates it will be enforced after the ratification which will be made in a six month deadline.

'New Structures' Assigned

LD1802155289 Rabat MAP in English 1259 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Marrakech, Feb.18,(MAP)—In addition to the texts of the declaration of the inception of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the Marrakech Treaty, the five Maghreban heads of state signed a third document which is presented under the form of a resolution.

The Maghreban leaders in the resolution approve the works of the higher commission stemming from the Zeralda summit (Algeria) as well as the works of the sectorial committees which convened in each of the Maghreban capitals.

In this last document,the five heads of state assign the new structures set up by the treaty of the Arab Maghreb Union to carry out the practical conclusions of the committees namely through the drawing up of an action programme and an implementation timetable.

The sectorial committees namely tackled issues relating to finance and customs (Morocco), economy (Algeria), organization and structure (Libya),security and social affairs (Tunisia) and culture,information and education (Mauritania).

Damascus Sets Conditions for Talks with 'Awn

JN1802192989 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 17 Feb 89 p 21

[Excerpts] Beirut—AL-ITTIHAD has learned that Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, Kuwaiti foreign minister and chairman of the six-member Arab committee tasked with tackling the Lebanese crisis, is carrying out intensive efforts far from the limelight to approximate viewpoints and initiate a direct dialogue between Damascus and General Michel 'Awn. [pasage omitted]

A ranking Lebanese official has told AL-ITTIHAD that Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah discussed the question of reconciliation with President Hafiz al-Asad and senior Syrian officials during his recent visit to Damascus 2 weeks ago. The source said that Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad told the Syrian leaders that Michel 'Awn is ready to cooperate fully with Syria and open a new page in his relations with the Syrian leaders. The Lebanese official added that ‘Awn had also expressed his complete readiness to respond to Syria's proposals in a manner that will serve its role in Lebanon and facilitate the holding of presidential elections.

The Lebanese official said that during his meeting with ‘Awn in Tunis on 1 February, the Kuwaiti foreign minister succeeded in convincing him of the need to open up to Syria, given that it is the party that holds the key to the solution of the Lebanese crisis and that without it nothing can be achieved on the level of settling the crisis. Michel ‘Awn said he is ready to positively respond to the Kuwaiti foreign minister's efforts.

In his statement to AL-ITTIHAD, the Lebanese official said that President al-Asad has informed Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah that the doors to Damascus are open to Gen Michel ‘Awn, on the condition that he impose the sovereignty of the legitimate authorites in East Beirut, and push the Lebanese Forces out so that East Beirut can enjoy the same security as West Beirut under the canopy of the national army and the Syrian forces. [passage omitted]

King Husayn Reportedly To Visit Damascus ‘Soon’
JN1802165989 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 17 Feb 89 p 1

[Text] Baghdad—Informed sources yesterday told AL-ITTIHAD that King Husayn of Jordan will soon visit Damascus on what was described as an explanatory visit following the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC], which comprises Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, and The YAR. The sources pointed out that YAR President Colonel ‘Ali ‘Abdallah Salih will make a silmilar visit to Saudi Arabia.

On the other hand, an Egyptian source has stated that it is very likely that the PDRY will join the ACC and it may become the fifth state in the new council.

Palestinian Affairs

‘Arafat Urges Economic Union With Israel, Others
NC1902140889 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1345 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Kuwait, 19 Feb (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir ‘Arafat has affirmed that there is a historical opportunity to achieve a genuine peace between the Palestinians and Israelis. He pointed out that serious indirect contacts are currently taking place between the PLO and the Israeli Government.

In a television interview with the U.S. CBS network, which will be aired this evening, Yasir ‘Arafat expressed readiness to sit down with Israeli Prime Minister Shamir at a negotiating table to establish peace. In the interview, which was published by Kuwaiti newspaper AL-QABAS today, ‘Arafat asked U.S. President George Bush to advance the peace process and convene the international Middle East peace conference.

In another development, ‘Arafat called for establishing an economic union [ittihad iqtisadi] among Jordan, Israel, Palestine, and Lebanon. He noted that this union would constitute the basic guarantee for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace. ‘Arafat welcomed any efforts that are bound to achieve reconciliation between Syria and the PLO.

Comments on Pan Am Blast
NC1902142489 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1355 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Washington, 19 Feb (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir ‘Arafat has emphasized that he has no evidence indicating any connection between the Ahmad Jibril-led PFLP-GC and the explosion of the Pan Am airliner over Scotland on 21 December. The explosion claimed the lives of 270 people.

In the U.S. TV program "60 Minutes" scheduled to be aired tonight, ‘Arafat expressed the conviction that the Palestinians are not responsible for the incident. He pointed out that if the PFLP-GC is proven responsible, the PLO will punish Ahmad Jibril. ‘Arafat, however, did not specify the kind of punishment.

In the program, which will be broadcast over the Voice of America today, ‘Arafat emphasized that he will adopt punitive measures against any Palestinian dissident faction if it is definitely proven responsible for blowing up the U.S. airliner.

It should be recalled that some Western intelligence agencies and news media have concluded that the explosion of the U.S. airliner was carried out by the PFLP-GC, which is led by Ahmad Jibril and supported by Syria.

PFLP-GC Condemns Statement
JN2002190289 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1744 GMT 20 Feb 89

["Press statement" by the PFLP-GC—date, place not given]

[Text] The PFLP-GC Political Bureau has condemned ‘Arafat's recent statements in which he announced his plan to establish a union comprising the Zionist entity, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon. The PFLP-GC Political Bureau stressed that ‘Arafat and his deviationist trend are daily consecrating a flagrant treasonous line which invites all honorable people in the Palestinian arena to define a stand toward it.

The Political Bureau condemned ‘Arafat's statement that he is holding negotiations with the Zionist enemy on a truce in southern Lebanon to prevent military operations against the Zionist entity to complement ‘Arafat's plot against armed struggle. This requires all of 'Arafat's allies in the Palais des Pins to reconsider their alliance with 'Arafat, as denunciation is insufficient in this regard. What is required is an evaluation that renounces alliance with the deviationist trend that gives the Zionist enemy everything.

As for 'Arafat's statement that he will punish Ahmad Jibril if he is proven to be responsible for the U.S. airliner blast, the PFLP-GC sees in this statement an obvious escalation of differences in the Palestinian arena which will lead to bloody fighting that serves the Zionist enemy and the United States. This is a serious matter to which we draw the attention of all Palestinian resistance factions. In the meantime, we consider this statement an attempt to undermine our front and its secretary general. 'Arafat, leader of the deviationist trend, will be held responsible for the consequences.

PFLP Denounces Statements

JN2002201889 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1753 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] In a statement issued today, the PFLP Political Bureau's spokesman denounced 'Arafat's statements on his readiness to set up a common market comprising the Zionist entity, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon. He also condemned the indirect negotiations he is holding with the Zionist enemy in order to agree to a truce in Lebanon. The spokesman stressed that these stands imply a strange insistence by 'Arafat to stick to his individual policy, which heeds no legitimate Palestinian institutions or principles of collective leadership.

The spokesman added that this behavior by 'Arafat reflects serious disregard of Palestinian national unity, which all are seeking to bolster, develop, and promote in a manner commensurate with the great challenges facing the Palestinian people.

The spokesman stressed that the PFLP does not consider itself committed to 'Arafat's stands or the results of his negotiations with the Zionist enemy. It stresses its determination to continue the escalation of armed struggle against the Zionist enemy in southern Lebanon and Palestine.

After stressing that the PFLP views 'Arafat's statements as a serious precedent with negative repercussions on the uprising and extremely important meanings, the Political Bureau spokesman called on the Palestinian national and democratic forces and figures to stand firmly against such serious violations in order to stop the current negotiations with the enemy and adopt the necessary measures to prevent the recurrence of such capitulationist stands.

PPSF Criticizes Offer

JN2002193889 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1747 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Commenting on Yasir 'Arafat's statements to the U.S. television network on the call for economic unity with the Zionist enemy and on the current contacts for a truce with the enemy in southern Lebanon, a spokesman for the Political Bureau of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front [PPSF] has stated the following:

The Palestinian revolution factions have exerted intensive efforts throughout the past period in order to achieve national unity. They displayed flexibility and great desire to preserve this unity in support of the popular intifadah [uprising] in Palestine. However, the PLO's domineering leadership has since then been making the most serious concessions to the United States and the Zionist enemy at the expense of the Palestinian Arab people's historical rights.

'Arafat's call for the establishment of economic unity with the Zionist enemy and his readiness to conclude a truce in southern Lebanon are a new link in the chain of concessions. This endangers the future of the Palestine question and national Palestinian unity.

The PPSF, while declaring its denunciation and condemnation of these serious statements, announces that these stands do not represent the Palestinian people's will or the Palestinian revolution, and Yasir 'Arafat will bear full responsibility for the consequences of his concessional policies, which inflicted and continue to inflict the heaviest damage on our people's struggle and their glorious intifadah.

In order to confront this serious policy, which constitutes a new qualitative turning point in the course of the Palestine question, we ask all factions, forces, and national Palestinian figures to shoulder their historic responsibility in order to protect the Palestine question and the PLO against the dangers of deviation and liquidation. We call on all these factions, forces, and figures to hold an emergency meeting in order to study the necessary steps that should be taken to thwart the continuing policy of concessions.

RPCP Decries Proposal

JN2002193489 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1750 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Commenting on 'Arafat's call for a Zionist-Palestinian-Jordanian-Lebanese economic federation, the leadership of the Revolutionary Palestinian Communist Party [RPCP] has made the following press statement: Yasir 'Arafat's proposal during his press interview with the U.S. CBS agency for setting up an economic federation comprising the Zionist entity, Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan shows the level reached by the rightist leadership which dominates the PLO and which calls for forming a joint economic framework with the Zionists. In fact, this means readiness for brokering in favor of the Zionist ambition to spread economic hegemony over the region.

In light of the Zionist economic and military superiority, in light of the expansionist and aggressive trend which dominates the Zionist nature, and in light of the continued Zionist insistence on normalizaing relations and opening the Arab borders and markets as a basic condition for any political settlement, 'Arafat's proposal means placing these Arab countries under the mercy of the tyranny of the Zionist economy—a tyranny which the Zionists exercised over economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and during their occupation of southern Lebanon. In addition, this proposal also means absolute acceptance of the facts of the Zionist economy in the Palestinian land.

The statement made by the RPCP also adds that 'Arafat's proposal is not merely a press statement made in a state of absent-mindedness. On the contrary, 'Arafat had talked about contacts with the Zionists to reach a truce in southern Lenbanon, which constitutes the only gateway for a practical support for our people's intifadah [uprising] in Palestine. It also reveals the humiliating behavior of this leadership, which considers negotiations and contacts with the Zionists, whose criminal hands are stained with our people's blood every day, an achievement and a victory.

The continuation of the 'Arafatist leadership's shameful policy constitutes a stigma in the history of our resistant and brave people, who are struggling to liberate their homeland with their blood. It is the duty of the Palestinian masses, who take pride in their glorious intifadah, and it is also the duty of the national forces in the Palestinian and Arab arenas, to confront this leadership—which wants to bow to the Zionist usurpers—and prevent it from distorting the bright history of our people.

PLO Regrets 'No Progress' in Dialogue With U.S.

JN2002181889 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] The PLO today expressed through Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf] its disappointment over the U.S. delay in defining a Middle East policy although 2 months have elapsed since the start of dialogue between Washington and the PLO. Abu Iyad regretted the fact that no progress was made in the shy dialogue the United States began with the PLO. He stressed the urgent need to hold a meeting this year for the international conference preparatory committee.

22 Feb 'Arafat-Shevardnadze Meeting Confirmed

NC2002145189 Cairo MENA in English 1432 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Tunis, Feb 20 (MENA)—Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Yasir 'Arafat, will meet next Wednesday [22 February] in Cairo with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who is currently on a visit to Egypt within a tour in the region, it was officially announced here today.

A spokesman for the PLO Executive Committee said in a statement issued here today that the PLO looks forward to this meeting with great interest as it reflects the high-Level Soviet-Palestinian coordination and embodies understanding between the two sides which began with the historic meeting between 'Arafat and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

The Palestinian spokesman said that the forthcoming meeting between Shevardnadze and 'Arafat in Cairo acquires importance as it will be the first meeting at this level between the Soviet and Palestinian sides since the declaration of the Palestinian state on last November 15 which was recognized by the Soviet Union.

This meeting also comes in the light of the wide international support for the Palestinian cause, he added.

The Palestinian spokesman said that Shevardnadze's current tour in the Middle East reflects the Soviet Union's keenness on peace in the region and the necessity of activating efforts for reaching a settlement in the light of the international detente.

Spokesman Previews Talks

LD2002200289 Kuwait KUNA in English 1805 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Tunis, Feb 20 (KUNA)—The PLO attaches great importance to next Wednesday's meeting in Cairo between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

Official spokesman for the organization, in a statement carried by the Palestine news agency WAFA Monday, said that the meeting will reflect the high level of Soviet-Palestinian coordination and the two parties' understanding.

He added that the meeting's importance stems from the fact that it will be the first between the two parties following the declaration of the Palestinian state which Moscow recognized.

He noted that the Soviet chief diplomat's visit to the region reflects his country's concern with peace in the Middle East and importance of activating efforts to prevail permanent and just peace in the region.

The minister's visit will expedite efforts for the convening of the international conference on peace in the Mideast, the spokesman concluded.

Shevardnadze arrived in Egypt at an early hour today at the third leg of a Mideast tour that took him to Syria and Jordan.

'Disappointment' Over USSR Mediation With Syria

JN2002120189 Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 18 Feb 89 pp 1, 14

[By Fathi al-Barqawi]

[Text] Tunis—High-ranking Palestinian sources have expressed disappointment at the results of Soviet mediation to normalize relations between Syria and the PLO. The sources said that 'Arafat will meet with the Soviet foreign minister in Baghdad instead of Damascus. These sources told AL-BAYAN that PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, who was expected to visit Damascus during the past 2 days, has canceled this visit.

The Palestinian sources stated that the USSR tried to hold the meeting between Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and the Palestinian leader in Damascus by pressuring the Syrian side. However, the Syrian side was satisfied with expressing its welcome. But 'Arafat requested that an official invitation be addressed to him from the Syrian Government to make the visit. Syria, however, did not make any response until noon yesterday. The Palestinian sources added that the Syrian Government released some [Palestinian] prisoners in Syrian prisons.

'Arafat Aide Discusses Relations With Israel

LD1802114489 Kuwait KUNA in English 1050 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] London, Feb 18 (KUNA)—Information adviser of the PLO chairman, Bassam Abu Sharif has described relations with Israel as developing gradually and continuously and said there is nothing that hinders a meeting between Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

Abu Sharif believed, in an interview in the latest edition of the London-based AL-SAYYAD magazine, that similarly a meeting between 'Arafat and European leaders is possible while one with U.S. officials would take time.

Referring to dialogue between the PLO and Israeli and Jewish parties supportive of the Palestinian people's rights of self-determination and statehood, he said it was not new, but that it has been highlighted recently in the Western media following 'Arafat's peace initiative of settling the Mideast problem by establishing two states on the land of Palestine.

Abu Sharif described the Algiers resolutions by the Palestine National Council as offering an historical bargain of setting up two states on Palestinian soil as solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Palestinian official maintained that unless the present Israeli Government changed its attitude towards the international peace conference it would be difficult for her to remain in power, explaining that the rising tide within the Israeli community, even though slow, is pushing for talks with the PLO and a settlement based on recognizing Palestinian rights and Israel's right to secure an internationally-guaranteed border.

Asked to elaborate on this point, Abu Sharif said the subject is open to negotiation but insisted that Israel should principally reconfirm its commitment to Security Council Resolution 242 which calls for withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967, including the Syrian Golan Heights.

PNC Official Says Israel Slows U.S. Steps

NC1902170989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1539 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—PNC Secretary Muhammad Subayh has disclosed that the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue is continuing and that the discussions at meetings of the two sides deal with ways of establishing peace in the Middle East through the convening of an international conference. He added that the current political conditions call for raising the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue to a higher level.

In an interview with MENA, Subayh said that the PLO informs the U.S. side about the daily issues confronting the Palestinians in the occupied territories and about the repressive Israeli actions against the Palestinian citizens for two reasons: First, the special relationship between the United States and Israel, and second, the permanent membership of the United States in the Security Council.

Regarding the international conference, the PNC secretary said that the conditions prevailing at Arab, Palestinian, and European levels are conducive to holding such a conference. He noted, however, the slowness of the U.S. Administration's steps because of Israel's obduracy. He emphasized that a bold step is needed to establish peace in the Middle East now that the PLO has recognized UN Resolution 242, something that the U.S. had always demanded.

The PNC secretary noted that the PLO has agreed to hold elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip immediately after Israel's withdrawal or after the territories have been placed under appropriate international supervision, which would protect the citizens against Israeli terrorism. He emphasized that the PLO rejects the holding of Israeli-controlled elections, saying that the 1976 municipal elections are an experience for the PLO in this respect.

Referring to the European stand on the Middle East issue, Subayh said that European action is still slow. He pointed out that, while the Palestinian leadership recognizes current European efforts in this regard, it seeks more vital ones. The PNC secretary stated that these efforts are not yet sufficient to push the Middle East peace process forward, particularly after the PLO adopted stands that Western Europe often advocated.

Subayh emphasized that the PNC has laid a sound basis for the peace process through the historic resolutions it issued at the al-intifidah [uprising] session in Algiers. These resolutions define the rights and duties of all sides.

Intifadah Leaders Ask Halt of Military Actions

JN1802065189 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0600 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 18 Feb (WAKH)—Press reports here this morning said the Palestinian leadership last week received a message from the Unified Leadership of the Intifadah [uprising] inside the occupied territories. The message asks the PLO leadership to refrain from carrying out military operations outside the occupied Palestinian territories and for the intensification of efforts to back the intifadah and support the popular resistance against occupation forces.

AL-ITTIHAD cited Palestinian sources in the occupied territories as saying that the message was received by a person close to Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat and responsible for the affairs of the occupied territories and the intifadah. He conveyed the message to 'Arafat in a European capital last Saturday [11 February].

The message included important information about Zionist schemes to distract attention away from the international media interest given to the intifadah and to break Israel's isolation, especially after the European stands and the large-scale international condemnation of the inhumane, oppressive practices by the occupation forces.

New U.S. Administration Criticized for Veto

JN1902200089 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] The logic of the new American Administration is indeed bizarre. Beyond taking sides and twisting things around, it seeks to justify crime and misrepresent facts. The former U.S. Administration had gone to great lengths in showing hosility to the Palestinians and taking Israel's side. It went about that, however, without equivocating or advancing fallacious arguments. It merely exercised its prerogative to veto and that was that. Making a mockery of logic, the present administration explains its veto vote by saying that the violence practiced by the Palestinians cannot be condoned.

Just how the American delegate at the UN Security Council arrived at this conclusion is beyond our comprehension. Neither do we understand how he chose to forget that all the Palestinians are doing is hurling a stone that may or may not cause a superficial wound on an Israeli soldier. The Americans know only too well the extent of the casualties and damage the Israelis can inflict using American bullets, tear gas, bombs, and explosives. Not to mention numerous other methods, including burning to death unsuspecting Palestinians asleep in their huts and burying alive Palestinian children.

The American UN ambassador Herbert Okun might have confined himself to casting the negative ballot in accordance with his administration's instructions. But for him to equate crime and self-defense is something that no cizilized person will understand or accept, unless it comes from anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian racists.

We said yes to the American-Palestinian dialogue in order that the door to peace may be opened for our tormented people. If the American idea of dialogue is condescension and maintaining their support for terror, then the prospect for making any headway must indeed look bleak. The American veto has been a real letdown for us. Even more disappointing was the American delegate's rationale that drew a parallel between the bare-chested, stone-throwing child and the Israeli soldier equipped with a machine-gun and poison gas. It will be some time before the dialogue proceeds smoothly. The Americans will first have to forswear their arrogance and stubborness and see people through one pair rather than two pairs of glasses.

Baker's Statement on Military Action Decried

JN1802090589 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] O brothers: The Palestinian people have a legitimate right to struggle against the Israeli occupation, using all means at their disposal. International norms and resolutions adopted by the United Nations recognize this right for all peoples under occupation. Any attempt by any UN member to oppose the Palestinian people's right to struggle using all means at this disposal to gain independence is considered a blatant violation of these international norms and laws.

This is directed at the U.S. Administration that gives itself the right—through Secretary of States James Baker—to object to the armed Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation.

People's struggle against occupation cannot be classified by any force. No occupation can be expelled with roses. The people seeking independence and freedom will use, in their struggle, all methods of confrontation against occupation.

With regard to the Palestinian people, the brave intifadah [uprising] is a part of the comprehensive revolutionary struggle against the Israeli occupation—the oppressive and criminal force. [words indistinct] The Palestinian intifadah did not take place at the expense of the fighting Palestinian rifle. [passage indistinct]

Every battle for independence has its own distinctive features and circumstances. [words indistinct] Some Palestinians live in the diaspora and others in the occupied homeland. [passage indistinct]

Each stage of struggle has its own characteristics and symbols. The Palestinian stone, which characterizes the current struggle, does not conflict with the Palestinian rifle; it is in harmony with the conflict requirements and the battle circumstances.

Let the bestial Israeli occupation understand this. Let the U.S. Administration also understand this, as it turns a blind eye to all these bloody Israeli outrages against our people in the occupied homeland. [words indistinct] to confront the occupation are practicing a strange role. They are classifying our struggle against the Zionist occupation in accordance with their mood, which accepts the bloody and hawkish acts as well as the intransigence of the army of Shamir, Sharon, and Rabin [word indistinct] that the Palestinian rifle is still embracing the Palestinian stone in the epic of Palestinian freedom.

Does the U.S. Administration want us to exchange the military Zionist barbarity against our camps in southern Lebanon with roses and joy instead of confronting it with the steadfast fighting rifle and all means at our disposal because the latter will be called terrorism according to the dictionary of U.S. Secretary of State Mr Baker? [passage indistinct]

Egypt

Reportage on Visit of Soviet Foreign Minister

Shevardnadze Arrives, Speaks

NC1902234589 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2325 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze arrived in Cairo from Amman after midnight for a 3-day visit to Egypt.

Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Soviet Ambassador to Cairo Gennadiy Zhuravlev were at the airport to welcome the Soviet foreign minister.

In a statement after his arrival, the Soviet foreign minister lauded the efforts exerted by Egypt's leaders to establish peace in the Middle East. He emphasized that a solution to the dispute in the region requires joint efforts by the UN Security Council and the parties concerned with the dispute.

Shevardnadze said: There are some issues in the region. Our mission is to discuss these issues in depth in order to find solutions on the basis of joint efforts.

Asked if progress toward solving the Middle East problem has been made during his discussions in Syria and Jordan, Shevardnadze said: I hope there will be progress in solving this problem, and not only because of my visit.

Shevardnadze expressed his gratitude to the Egyptian leadership and people on the occasion of his visit to Cairo. He emphasized that a new stage of cooperation between Egypt and the Soviet Union will begin on the basis of mutual respect and complete equality.

'Abd al-Majid on Soviet Role

NC2002081890 Cairo MENA in English 0745 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] London, Feb 20 (MENA)—Egyptian Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid stressed that the Soviet Union is playing a positive and constructive role in the Middle East adding that such a role goes in line with the Soviet Union's policy characterised by its flexibility and understanding of international issues.

In a statement carried today by the BBC, Dr. 'Abd al-Majid said there is no competition between the Soviet Union and United States in the field of diplomacy in the Mideast. He expressed Egypt's welcome of the diplomatic activities carried out by the two superpowers.

On the other hand, the BBC described the present visit to Egypt by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, as an assertion of the continuous amelioration of ties between the Egyptian and Soviet Governments.

Mubarak Receives Shevardnadze

NC2002104789 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1036 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—At the presidential office this afternoon, President Husni Mubarak received Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who is currently visiting Egypt.

Mubarak Hosts Banquet

NC2002125689 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1235 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak hosted a working lunch in honor of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze at the Presidential Palace today. During the banquet, Mubarak and Shevardnadze resumed the talks they had started earlier today.

'Abd al-Majid on Visit

NC2002155189 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1510 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Statement by Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minsiter and foreign minister, following President Mubarak's meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, in Cairo on 20 February—recorded]

[Text] It pleases us to welcome the Soviet foreign minister, Mr Shevardnadze, to Cairo on his important visit. We are proud to have him with us. He held an important meeting with the president today. Undoubtedly the visit has its significance and implications, not merely with regard to bilateral relations, which are good and excellent, but with regard to the role that the USSR plays in promoting the peace process. We in Egypt are concerned with exerting every possible effort to drive the peace cause forward, to attain a just and comprehensive solution to all issues in the Middle East, and to call for the convening of an international conference in which all parties, including the PLO, would participate. This conference would seek to attain a just settlement to the Palestinian question, which would secure for the Palestinian people their legitimate national rights.

Again, we welcome the distinguished visitor and his delegation.

Shevardnadze on 'Useful' Talks

NC2002160789 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1512 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Statement by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze following his meeting with President Husni Mubarak in Cairo on 20 February; recorded in Russian fading into Arabic translation]

[Text] At the beginning of his statement, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze expressed his appreciation and gratitude to Egypt for the welcome it has accorded him. Speaking about his discussions with President Husni Mubarak, he said: [sentence in third person as heard]

We have held lengthy talks with his excellency the president on important issues connected with bilateral cooperation within the scope of the relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union. These relations are developing in a dynamic and stable manner in all political, economic, trade, and cultural spheres. Now that we have passed the previous difficult stage, we are conducting continuous consultations in order to normalize relations between the two countries. Our goal is to bolster the relations between Egypt and the USSR.

I have delivered a message to President Mubarak from President Gorbachev. It contains some ideas from the Soviet leaders about international and regional issues, including some important concepts concerning the attainment of a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

I have extended, on behalf of President Gorbachev and the Soviet leaders, an invitation to President Mubarak to make an official and friendly visit to the USSR.

I can say that the talks which we have held have been useful. During these discussions, the president explained Egypt's viewpoint on international and regional issues. Naturally, the talks revolved around the issue of reaching a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. In this connection, there are no differences between the Egyptian and Soviet positions.

People's Assembly Welcomes Visit

NC2002180589 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1745 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Excerpt] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—The Foreign Relations Committee of the People's Assembly held a meeting today under its Chairman, Dr Muhammad 'Abdallah, and welcomed Eduard Shevardnadze's current visit to Cairo, which falls within his current tour of a number of countries in the region.

The committee noted the Egyptian political leadership's desire to maintain balanced relations with the East and the West, and President Husni Mubarak's intensive efforts to give impetus to the peace process in the Middle East. The committee reviewed the latest developments in the area in light of the extensive political contacts to give an impetus to the efforts for a peaceful settlement to resolve the Palestinian issue. [passage omitted]

'Abd al-Majid, Shevardnadze Speak

NC2002211189 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, hosted a dinner banquet tonight in honor of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who is currently on a visit to Egypt.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid delivered a speech in which he welcomed the Soviet guest and stressed that the two countries' relations are historic ones that have created a solid base of mutual understanding and appreciation. He added that peace for Egypt constitutes a principal tenet of its foreign policy. 'Abd al-Majid praised the PLO's efforts to convene an international conference for peace in the Middle East. He expressed Egypt's welcome over the completion of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan on 15 February and called for giving the Afghan people the opportunity to choose the ruling system they want.

Following is the text of Dr 'Abd al-Majid's speech at the banquet:

Dear friend, Eduard Shevardnadze, dear guests: It is my pleasure to warmly welcome you here in Cairo and to note that your visit is an expression of an indisputable fact; namely, that relations between our two countries have become firm and are characterized by vitality, increasing effectiveness, and mutual respect. Relations between our two countries are historic ones. They were not born today or yesterday but go back dozens of years. We celebrated the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations last August. Our cooperation throughout these long years has created a solid base of understanding and mutual appreciation. This makes us look toward a future that is filled with more constructive cooperation and fruitful dialogue.

We also are pleased that your visit comes at a time when our relations have restored a firm stability and a balanced development in various fields. This is reflected and strengthened by the constant consultations between our two countries at the various levels, which show a high level of confidence in the existing dialogue between the Egyptian and Soviet leaderships.

My visit to your dear country last May—and which I still remember with fondness and appreciation—was a practical expression of the extent to which our relations have developed positively. It was an opportunity to discuss various aspects of bilateral cooperation in all its forms and to exchange views on international issues of common interest.

On this occasion I would like to express our appreciation for the Soviet Union's interest in participating in the projects of our 5-year development plan for 1987-1992. This is not something new for the Soviet Union, which had participated earlier in building the High Dam—a lofty edifice that embodies the depth of relations between our countries and peoples.

Your Excellency, dear guests: We are following with admiration and appreciation your bold steps and the new political concepts which you are propounding which are characterized by a spirit of detente, openness, and understanding. This has created a positive and constructive environment in international relations. We are aware that all of us are responsible for providing this positive environment because this is an age in which interests are intertwined and based on mutual benefits and common destiny.

From this premise, we support and welcome every constructive effort toward disarmament, particularly all types of weapons of complete destruction, so that future generations may enjoy a world that is not threatened by the perils of destruction and in which prosperity prevails.

Egypt's faith in peace is deep-rooted and unshakable. Indeed, I would not be telling a lie if I said that peace constitutes a basic tenet of our foreign policy. From this premise, Egypt has persistently sought to establish a true peace in the Middle East that would guarantee a lasting and just solution to the Palestinian issue, the core of the conflict in the region.

The Palestinian people's uprising, which has now entered its 2d year despite the repressive measures of the Israeli forces, has made it impossible to continue denying these people's right to exercise self-determination.

The PLO's peace offensive calls for a response to the Palestinian peace appeal, so that we will not let an historic opportunity slip through our fingers.

If an international conference to discuss peace in the Middle East has become a matter that is meeting with international acceptance and indeed, international insistence, then the USSR is asked to shoulder its responsibility in hastening its convening. We are eager to discuss ideas and proposals within the scope of our contacts with your friendly country in order to pave the way and surmount difficulties in this respect.

We fully realize that the USSR, which has long supported the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, will spare no effort to promote peace in our region on the basis of balancing the legitimate interests of all parties. We are confident that through all sincere and constructive efforts, peace is inevitable.

Your Excellency, dear guests, Egypt has welcomed the completion of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan on 15 February. In this conection, I would like to express our appreciation for this step. We hope that the Afghan people will have the opportunity to choose a system of government that they can accept, without any foreign intervention, so that it may be possible for them to achieve stability and embark on reconstruction.

The achievements made with regard to reaching a settlement that would guarantee the attainment of the Namibian people's rights to liberty and independence on the basis of the pertinent UN resolutions, is a matter that calls for optimism. I can only express my aspiration and hope that the people of South Africa will regain their political and civic rights, of which the racist regime in South Africa has deprived them in contravention of international law and conventions.

Egypt's faith in the important role of the United Nations and its specialized agencies is unshakable. The United Nations' continuing assumption of a greater role for the sake of establishing peace and justice, and for attaining development is a matter that calls for appreciation and for further efforts.

Finally, allow me dear friends to express again our great pleasure at your visit to Egypt. We are confident that the spirit of cooperation and existing friendship between us will witness further positive development for the sake of our people's prosperity and good, and for the good of international peace and security.

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze then delivered a speech in which he praised Soviet-Egyptian relations and the two countries' multifaceted cooperation. He said that his talks with officials in Damascus and Amman and now in Cairo focused and are focusing on the means by which a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East can be reached through the convocation of an international conference. He stressed that the Soviet Union is ready to deal constructively with anyone willing to contribute to solving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Shevardnadze added that the objective of Soviet policy in the Middle East is the establishment of peace so that cordial and mutually beneficial relations can be established with all peoples and countries in the region without exception.

Following is the text of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's speech at the banquet:

Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, ladies and gentlemen: This evening has brought back memories of past and more recent times. Several months ago, last May, we received Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, Egypt's deputy prime minister and foreign minister, in Moscow. That visit was an unusual one and symbolized a new level of Soviet-Egyptian dialogue firmly established folowing the exchange of personal messages between President Mikhail Gorbachev and President Muhammad Husni Mubarak.

Now comes our visit to Cairo. It is the first visit in many years, the absence of which in the past had created a period of alienation. Political and social figures from our two countries are now overcoming this period and erasing it from the practical political map. But this period had never really existed in the minds and hearts of those Soviet citizens whose lives are linked to events in Port Said, Aswan, Hulwan, and Alexandria.

Najib Mahfuz, whose works are popular in the Soviet Union, and whom we deeply respect, has said: the good word will always have its aroma. We also add the good feelings, relationship, and memories. All these things are stronger than the most solid arsenals.

Our visit comes to solidify this trend. We most certainly can place the full normalization which has been achieved in Soviet-Egyptian relations in the same rank with the other major political achievements of the recent past which have facilitated the radical changes in the nature of world policy and in the substance of human dialogue in general. When I think of this issue, I remember the profound idea of ibn Khaldun, the Arab man of letters and science who lived in the Middle Ages, about cooperation, without which the lives of humans become less ideal. He also said that man cannot understand the world except through cooperation with his brother man. We are not living in the Middle Ages, but many old concepts with new contents are now filling our contemporary world.

What can we say about the forms of Soviet-Egyptian cooperation and its substance today? We are pleased that this cooperation is multisided and takes the form of political relations at the international and regional affairs. We have no objection to engaging in these dealings on a regular basis. Commercial, economic, scientific, and cultural relations are developing on a vertical line. Joint companies and establishments have started to appear.

Naturally, all of this is only the start. We can at this stage compare our relations with the spring. Clouds and chilly weather remain in the past and the first flowers have blossomed on the branches. But there is still much work to be accomplished before ripe fruit is reaped. We would like to see these fruits in all spheres, not only in the field of bilateral relations.

The recent period has witnessed improvement in the political atmosphere of this planet. The principles of the new political thinking in relations between countries are becoming entrenched. The first practical steps toward a more secure world have been taken. Dialogue increasingly has the upper hand over confrontation. Traditional concepts and norms are being reassessed. We are frankly saying that their time has passed. What is significant is that the Soviet Union is seeking from this general course to have dealings between countries assume a more democratic nature. This course sometimes reduces and sometimes completely rules out the ideological factor, which used to prevail in this field in the past.

The world cannot be protected from nuclear, economic, and environmental catastrophes except through action and guidance on the basis of the priorities of general human values. We are vitally interested in establishing international relations in accordance with the new concepts. We are pleased that the ideas and proposals expounded by Mikhail Gorbachev in his speech to the UN General Assembly have received positive and encouraging responses, as indicated in our talks with President Husni Mubarak.

This fact also increases our hope that Egypt, in its capacity as one of the respected and influential members of the international community and the Nonaligned Movement, will continue its energetic efforts to help clear the atmosphere, including that prevailing in the region in which it is a part.

While talking about cooperation between us, I will mention another aim of our visit. Today marks the 4th day since our arrival in the Middle East. Our meetings and talks in Damascus, Amman, and now in Cairo have clearly stressed that, as far as the Middle East is concerned, there is no more important task than reaching a comprehensive settlement. Our main impression from these meetings is that the Arab leaders look at the solution of the Middle East problems from the viewpoint of peace, in expression of their peoples' will. All of this drives us quickly to the issue of an international conference, and on the course of the practical steps needed to ensure its convocation.

Everyone has accepted that such a conference is the only possible road to just and solid peace in the region. The common denominator of the stances of all the parties concerned and the attainment of an acceptable solution to the disputed problems can only be found within this framework.

It is our belief that there is also an appropriate key to activate the negotiating process: This is the principle of the delicate balancing of the interests of the parties concerned, which are the Arab countries, the Palestinians, and Israel. The Soviet Union is willing to deal constructively with anyone willing to help solve the Arab-Israeli conflict. It goes without saying that we see Egypt as a partner in this extremely important issue.

Various hypothesis have been put forward in the past few days to explain our tour of the region. There is no reason for speculation because the aims of Soviet policy in the Middle East are clear.

The Middle East is near to our borders. It is near in view of our historic participation in the fate of the region's peoples and countries. It is also near because it is the cradle of human civilization, which is facing a number of dangers today. Hence, the objectives of our policy in the Middle East are the establishment of peace and to use such peaceful conditions to build and develop cordial relations of mutual benefit with all the peoples and countries of the region without exception.

Here, where the eye is sometimes deceived by the desert mirage, there must remain no scope for political illusions. The peaceful horizons of the Middle East are not an illusion or a mirage. Its notion is based on the pragmatic and conscious stand and on the realization of the higher responsibility for the fate of peoples. It is clear that the real practical application of this concept requires great efforts. For this reason, doubts and suspicions must be abandoned and the will, full readiness, and civilized dialogue must be shown.

The Middle East could be and should be the only place where dealings concerning the fate of the people living there are conducted. The duty of the international community, or any one of its members, is to give honest assistance to the Middle East in this. We look at our current visit to the Arab Republic of Egypt from the perspective of this duty. We are confident that Soviet-Egyptian cooperation will take the Middle East issue into consideration.

This is the objective that we are working to achieve together with you and with the other countries in the region. Let this work bring us good and be for the sake of peace in the Middle East.

We wish the sons of this earth, which has suffered much, the fulfillment of their hopes and ambitions. I wish Your Excellency and you dear people here continued health and wish peace and prosperity for the Egyptian people.

'Abd al-Majid, Shevardnadze Meet

NC2002230189 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze this evening. The discussion dealt with Middle East developments.

Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid stated that Egypt desires to contribute effectively to the peace efforts. He said that the Soviet foreign minister's visit is important, noting that the USSR is moving for the first time at the foreign minister level to contact all the parties in the region. He added that Egypt welcomes this movement and considers it a positive step because it proves the USSR's eagerness, as well as its weight and standing as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. 'Abd al-Majid remarked that the meeting in Cairo is a continuation of Shevardnadze's meetings in Jordan, Syria, and Baghdad [as heard]. He added that Shevardnadze's expected meetings with Moshe Arens and Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat portrays the importance of his current activity.

Commenting on the proposals which the Soviet foreign minister reportedly is bringing with him, Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that Shevardnadze has not yet submitted anything in this respect. He added that Shevardnadze has presented the broad outlines of which we already are aware, namely, the need to hold an international conference under UN auspices and the need for Palestinian representation.

On Shevardnadze's meeting with Arens in Cairo, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid said that it completes previous meetings between the two, the most recent being a meeting held on the sidelines of the disarmament conference in Paris. 'Abd al-Majid said Arens' visit is taking place at the USSR's request, a request made 10 days ago. Egypt accepted this request and conveyed it to Israel.

In conclusion, Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that he does not believe that Arens will attend Yasir 'Arafat's meeting with the Soviet foreign minister. He pointed out that the Israeli foreign minister will leave Cairo before Yasir 'Arafat's arrival.

Meanwhile, Shevardnadze stated that he expects to hold a dialogue with the Israeli foreign minister to complete the meeting the two held in Paris. He said that he also will meet with Yasir 'Arafat to discuss the Middle East question and all other issues, as well as new regional developments now that the PLO has adopted a positive stance. Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid commented on this by saying that the Arab atmosphere is currently better that it used to be.

Commenting on the situation between Egypt and Syria, 'Abd al-Majid declared that there are no disagreements between the two. He added that there are now some signs that each side now better understands and appreciates the other side's stands. [Cairo MENA in Arabic at 2210 GMT on 20 February in a similar report on the statements by 'Abd al-Majid and Shevardnadze adds the following: "Regarding relations between Egypt and Syria, Sheverdnadze expressed his belief that relations between the two countries are developing for the better and that each side is showing an understanding of the other's position.]

2d Round of Talks Opens

NC2102095489 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0907 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 21 Feb (MENA)—A second session of political talks between Egypt and the Soviet Union opened at the Foreign Ministry this morning. Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, led the Egyptian delegation, while Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze headed his country's delegation.

The talks between the two delegations which began last night will be completed at this session. They include a review of viewpoints on several regional and international issues, particularly the situation in Lebanon, African issues, and the question of peace in Kampuchea. Ways of promoting bilateral cooperation in various fields are also being discussed.

A Foreign Ministry source has said that the first session of the Egyptian-Soviet talks illustrated the eagerness of both parties to consolidate and develop bilateral relations in various spheres. At the conclusion of the talks, Shevardnadze is expected to confer with Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi. The Soviet foreign minister will visit Aswan tomorrow, Wednesday. On Thursday, he will give a news conference at the political club in Cairo. At the beginning of the news conference, Shevardnadze will deliver a political statement on his visit and on his conclusions on his talks with Egyptian officials, the Israeli foreign minister, and PLO Executive Committee

Chairman Yasir Arafat. Shevardnadze's visit to Cairo began 2 days ago and will end on Thursday. The Soviet foreign minister will then leave Cairo for Iraq to continue his tour, which began with visits to Syria and Jordan and will also include Iran.

Shevardnadze To Meet With PLO's 'Arafat

NC2002080490 Paris AFP in English 0747 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, Feb 20 (AFP)—Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze will meet Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Cairo, probably on Wednesday, Palestinian sources said Monday.

Mr. Shevardnadze told reporters in Amman before arriving here that he would hold talks with the PLO leader in Cairo as planned and not in Baghdad as previously reported by the Soviet ambassador to Egypt.

The meeting was set for Cairo at the insistence of the Palestinians, Arab diplomats said. The two men will probably meet after Mr. Shevardnadze confers with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens who is also in Egypt.

Mr. Shevardnadze, who is on the third leg of a five-nation tour in the region that has already taken him to Damascus and Amman, is exploring the possibility of convening an international conference on the Middle East.

He will later go to Baghdad and Tehran.

PLO, Soviet Officials Confer

NC2002231689 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2205 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—PLO Representative in Cairo Sa'id Kamal has met with Vladimir Polyakov, head of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Soviet Foreign Ministry, who is currently on a visit to Cairo as a member of the delegation accompanying Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Sheverdnadze.

The two officials exchanged views on the Palestinian issue, developments in the international arena, and the preparations for the meeting to be held between Eduard Sheverdnadze and PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat this week in Cairo.

Soviet, Israeli Foreign Ministers To Meet

NC1902104289 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1032 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—MENA has learned that a meeting between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens will be held at the Soviet Embassy in Cairo Wednesday morning.

Egyptian diplomatic sources have stated that Egypt has agreed to a Soviet request to host this meeting between the Soviet and Israeli foreign ministers in view of its potential for advancing the peace process in the Middle East.

Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, will hold talks with Moshe Arens during the latter's visit to Cairo.

Reasons for Visit Noted

NC1902114089 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1120 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—An authoritative source in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry has stated that a meeting between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens will be held in Cairo during Shevardnadze's visit, due to begin tomorrow and last until 23 February.

The source added that Egypt has agreed to a Soviet request to host this meeting out of its desire to encourage any effort that may promote the peace process and accelerate the holding of an international conference on peace in the Middle East.

The source explained that the Israeli foreign minister will use the opportunity of his stay in Cairo to discuss Egyptian-Israeli relations with high-ranking Egyptian officials.

Reportage on Visit by Israeli Foreign Minister

Arrives for 2-Day Stay

NC2002161789 Cairo MENA in English 1526 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, Feb 20 (MENA)—Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens arrived here today on a two-day visit to Egypt. Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, Egyptian Ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni and his Israeli counterpart here Shim'on Shamir welcomed Arens at the airport.

Received by President Mubarak

NC2002170489 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens at the presidential offices this evening. Arens had arrived in Cairo earlier today.

Arens on Talks

NC2002190789 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens at the presidential offices this evening. Arens had arrived in Cairo earlier this afternoon.

President Mubarak and the Israeli foreign minister initially had a private round of talks before being joined by Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

Following the talks, Dr 'Abd al-Majid described Arens' visit to Cairo as an important one that Egypt considers to be a new basis for the peace process, for whose sake all are concentrating their efforts.

Moshe Arens expressed pleasure at being in Cairo. He described his talks with President Mubarak as absolutely serious and very constructive, and noted that they dealt with all the issues that concern all the parties in the region. Moshe Arens stressed that President Mubarak is concentrating his efforts to give an impetus to the peace process in the Middle East. Arens expressed his belief that the Egyptian-Israeli peace is a basis that could be used to build a comprehensive peace. He said that he has no doubt at all that Egypt under the leadership of President Mubarak can play an important role in the peace process.

Arens stressed that his talks with President Mubarak were extremely important and that they had a good exchange of views.

Arens, 'Abd al-Majid on Talks

NC2002224989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2100 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Excerpts] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, joined the meeting between President Husni Mubarak and visiting Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens this evening after President Mubarak and Minister Arens had held an approximately 1-hour private meeting.

In a statement after the meeting Dr 'Abd al-Majid commented on the talks by expressing his belief that Arens' visit is very important. [passage omitted]

Asked what his visit to Egypt signifies with regard to Egyptian-Israeli relations and the resolution of the Tabah issue, Arens said: I do not know if the two matters are linked because, in light of the information I have, a settlement of the Tabah issue has been reached.

Arens then addressed Dr 'Abd al-Majid saying: Is what I am saying true, Mr Minister? Dr 'Abd al-Majid responded: "Yes, I believe that it will be settled, finally." Arens expressed his conviction that Egyptian-Israeli relations continue to improve.

Asked whether diplomatic relations will be resumed in the wake of his meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, Arens said: "I believe that it would be better for us to talk about this matter after the meeting has taken place."

Responding to a question about the new points he is presenting to give momentum to the peace process in the Middle East, Arens said: this is not an appropriate occasion to propound plans. I am now under the influence of my very important talks with President Mubarak. To another question, Arens replied: The talks with President Mubarak were extremely good and there was a very good exchange of views.

Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid said that energetic efforts are being exerted for the sake of all sides and their interests. This is our conviction. We are working for the benefit of the peace process. We are committed to this and are doing everything to achieve it. I am sure that the peace process is welcomed in Israel as well as in Egypt, among the Palestinians and the rest of the Arabs, and all states.

Asked if PLO participation in the peace process had been discussed, Dr 'Abd al-Majid said: "We did not discuss this subject." As to whether there has been a change in Israel's stand regarding the convening of an international conference for peace, the Egyptian foreign minister said: The Egyptian stand on an international conference is well known. We believe that the international conference is the best way to achieve peace and that the PLO should fully participate in it. This is the Egyptian stand and I hope that it is clear. Palestinians have the right to choose who is to represent them and have the power to speak for them.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid emphasized that the Palestinians have shown much flexibility and much understanding in the wake of the PNC resolutions. That the United Nations adopted these resolutions is a clear indication of the very important steps that have been taken by the PLO. The foreign minister expressed hope that Israel will be able to discuss this change with an open heart and an open mind.

Radio Affirms 'Rejection' of Shamir Peace Plan

NC2002181389 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1745 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Prior to Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens' arrival in Cairo, Egyptian radio affirmed Egypt's rejection of the peace plan proposed by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir. His plan especially calls for direct negotiations with the Palestinians under the supervision of the two superpowers, but without the participation of the PLO.

Egyptian radio added that Shamir disregards the efforts being exerted to convene an international conference for peace in the Middle East. It emphasized that all the parties concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the PLO, must join this international conference with the participation of the five permanent members in the UN Security Council.

Minister Says Tabah Agreement Possible 20 Feb

NC2002151089 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1412 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—The sixth round of Egyptian-Israeli talks on the issue of compensation for the tourist facilities in Tabah was held in Cairo this afternoon.

The members of the Egyptian and Israeli delegations, the proprietors of the hotel and the tourist village in Tabah, and Abraham Sofaer, the U.S. State Department's legal adviser, attended the talks.

Following the meeting, Fu'ad Sultan, minister of tourism and civil aviation and chairman of the Egyptian delegation to the talks, described today's negotiations as "very difficult," and noted that much patience is required. He added, however, that the possibility exists that the Egyptian and Israeli delegations might reach "a decision which can be announced" at another session to be held this evening.

Fu'ad Sultan disclosed that should an agreement not be reached in this regard Egypt would ask "an international financial firm" to act as a third party to the talks.

The minister of tourism and civil aviation explained that the signing of a final agreement on the compensation to be paid for the tourist facilities in Tabah is due to take place on 26 February in the presence of Egyptian, Israeli, and U.S. representatives.

Negotiations at 'Square One'

NC2002230489 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2229 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—Fu'ad Sultan, minister of tourism and civil aviation and chairman of the Egyptian delegation to the Egyptian-Israeli talks that were held tonight, said: We are still at square one in the negotiations, which began 4 days ago. The issues are still pending and we have not reached an agreement.

He expressed the hope that the political leadership would reach an agreement on this issue, and said: The talks we are holding are merely economic ones with the owner and concern the value and the management of the tourist facilities. The minister added: If the two countries do not intervene to exert some sort of pressure on the owner, then we will not be able to reach a correct solution.

The round of talks was attended by members of the Egyptian and Israeli delegations, as well as Abraham Sofaer, the U.S. State Department's legal adviser. The talks between the two sides will be resumed tomorrow morning, Tuesday.

President Mubarak Leaves on Visit to UAE

NC2102112889 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1115 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 21 Feb (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak left Cairo for Abu Dhabi at noon today for a visit to the UAE. During his stay, the President will meet with UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan.

U.S. Documents on 'Revolution' Case Demanded

JN1702191189 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 15 Feb 89 p 6

[By Hasan al-Sharqawi, Muhammad Tu'aymah, and Hisham al-Zayni]

[Excerpt] The defense counsel in the case of the "Egypt's Revolution" organization has asked that U.S. Embassy documents and recordings of its investigation of the third defendant, Ahmad 'Isam, be added to the file of the case before hearing the witnesses for the prosecution. The prosecution, however, has stressed that no such investigations exist and has accused the defense of attempting to obstruct the hearing.

Following an exciting 1-hour session, the emergency Supreme State Security Court decided to adjourn for 1 week. It also instructed the prosecution to find out if investigations were conducted at the U.S. Embassy with defendant Ahmad 'Isam and to take the necessary legal measures to add them to the file of the case if they exist. [passage omitted]

Sudan Releases 4 Trawlers, 60 Crewmen

JN2002174089 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 1 Feb 89 pp 1, 10

[By Muhammad 'Abd al-Majid]

[Excerpt] Alexandria—The Sudanese Government has released 4 Egyptian trawlers along with their 60 crewmen. The four trawlers sailed back to Al-Ghardaqah. This Sudanese decision is a positive step and a true expression of the profound fraternal relations between the Egyptian and Sudanese peoples.

I have learned that a decision will be issued at the end of the Sudanese courts' holiday within a few days to release the other three trawlers and their crewmen. [passage omitted]

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Returns From Maghreb Summit

LD1702235589 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 2300 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Excerpt] The brother leader of the revolution arrived in the Great Jamahiriyah at exactly 2030 this evening. He returned from Marrakech after taking part in the proceedings of the Maghreb summit. [passage omitted]

Countries Accept Arab Union 'in Principle'

LD2002210489 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution received today Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, who briefed him on his tour to the Arab countries on the southern shores of the great Arab homeland: North and South Yemen, Oman, Djibouti, and Somalia. The tour was within the framework of following up the project of the Arab Union, which was proposed by the brother leader of the revolution to the Arab president, kings and amirs, and of submitting the leader's unionist initiative in which he called upon those countries to set up a comprehensive Arab union to embrace the Arab countries on the southern shores of the Arab homeland.

Col Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir told the brother leader of the revolution that the Arab countries concerned accepted in principle the project of setting up a comprehensive Arab union to protect the southern part of the Arab homeland. Col Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir briefed the brother leader on the Great Jamahiriyah's proposal to resolve the inter-Sudanese and Sudanese-Ethiopia problems as Col Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir's tour also included Sudan and Ethiopia.

Morocco

Diplomatic Relations Established With PDRY

LD2002164689 Rabat MAP in Arabic 1530 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Rabat 20 Feb (MAP)—Morocco and PDRY have decided to establish diplomatic relations at the level of ambassadors.

In a statement issued on this matter, the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation pointed out: "Starting from the ties of fraternity, language, religion, and joint history which bind the peoples of Morocco and PDRY, and according to the commitment of the governments of both countries to consolidate these ties which bind the two countries, they agreed to establish diplomatic relations at the level of ambassadors in response to the mutual wishes of the two governments and fraternal peoples to open new horizons for cooperation in all fields for the benefit of both countries."

The statement added that the Governments of Morocco and PDRY, as they stress their intention to develop and strengthen the fraternity and amicable relations between them, declare their intention to coordinate their efforts and stances in order to consolidate joint Arab action and to contribute to the exerted efforts to consolidate peace, security, and cooperation at the international level.

Al-Qadhdhafi Pays Hassan II 'Exceptional Tribute'

LD1802004489 Rabat MAP in English 1238 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Marrakech, Feb 17. (MAP)—Observers here note it was an "exceptional tribute" Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi paid to King Hassan II during the opening session of the constituent Maghreban summit Thursday in Marrakech.

They note that Al-Qadhdhafi, not usually inclined to publicly praising his peers, had let his feeling flow freely to express admiration for King Hassan II and the Moroccan people.

Visibly touched and conquered by the warmth and spontaniety of the popular welcome reserved to the Maghreban leaders and for the monarch's kind and generous words in his opening address, Al-Qadhdhafi made a point of expressing, on behalf of the Maghreban leaders, his thanks to the sovereign who, Al-Qadhdhafi stressed, knew how to prepare the appropriate atmosphere for this historical meeting.

The Libyan leader also made a point of expressing his esteem, in a most marked manner, for the sovereign's militant action and contant mobilization in favour of the Arab and Islamic nation and for the defense of the Palestinian cause.

‘Aziz Assesses Arab Council, Peace Negotiations

JN1802165489 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1520 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Feb (INA)—Tariq ‘Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has affirmed that the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] is considered a very strong factor for achieving the Arab nation's stability and promoting its ability to confront the challenges obstructing its progress. ‘Aziz said at a press conference at the Conference Hall here today that this grouping will give the four Arab states a weight and influence greater than they would wield individually. Tariq ‘Aziz answered journalists' questions on two major issues—the establishment of the ACC and negotiations between Iraq and Iran.

‘Aziz explained that the steps taken to establish the ACC are objective and realistic and are aimed at achieving the overall objectives of the Arab League. They have epitomized the four Arab leaders' eagerness to make the ACC one of the Arab nation's organizations adhering to the Arab League Charter, the Collective Arab Defense Pact, and economic cooperation and establishing relations of cooperation with regional, Arab, and international groupings.

Asked about the coming steps regarding the work of the ACC, ‘Aziz said that the ACC countries have agreed to work seriously and not to hurry. The Ministerial Council will hold its first meeting in April to prepare the work schedules and the administrative and financial systems and to name the ACC secretary general. He added that the Supreme Council will meet in Cairo in May.

Asked about the ACC's poisition if an ACC member is exposed to a foreign threat, ‘Aziz said: As Arabs, I believe that if we start serious cooperation such as the establishment of the ACC by Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and the YAR, these threats will be less dangerous and the sources of such threats will consider the cooperation and coordination among the Arab countries.

‘Aziz also expressed hope that Iran will benefit from the defeat of its hostile policy and the establishment of the ACC and other Arab groupings so that it will respect its Arab neighbors, maintain relations with them on the basis of mutual respect and noninterference in domestic affaitrs, and abandon its expansionist ambitions, which have characterized its polices for a long time.

Regarding Iran's position on negotiations and the implementation of UN Resolution No 598, Tariq ‘Aziz said that the Iranian side has been adopting a propagandistic approach since negotiations started on 25 August of last year to avoid the essence of the resolution.

He added: Resolution No 598 represents a peace plan between Iraq and Iran and a plan for securing stability in the region. As a result, the peace plan should be implemented. But what has happened is that the Iranian side has dealt with the issue of peace by waging a political and propaganda war against Iraq on the resolution's stage to replace the war on which it insisted for 8 years and which ended in a fiasco for Iran.

‘Aziz touched on the agreement reached between Iraq and the UN secretary general on 8 August, under which Iraq and Iran should negotiate under the auspices of the UN secretary general, pointing out that direct negotiations in the sense of the word have not yet taken place and that during the meetings, the Iranian side has spoken in the passive voice and not as a negotiator.

‘Aziz added that the Iranian side is evading negotiations so as not to reveal its real position on the implementation of Resolution No 598 as a peace plan. It is dealing with international resolutions on an optional basis, selecting the ones that can achieve a gain for it but not carrying out its obligations to achieve a balance in duties and in the region.

‘Aziz also made it clear that no tangible results have been achieved from the negotiations. He said that the reason is that there is not a clear-cut political decision in Iran to implement the comprehsnsive peace plan, stressing Iraq's firm and principled position on the need to achieve a lasting and comprehensive peace. He added that the Iranian side is still dealing with the issue of the POW's in a bizarre and inhuman way, ignoring the third Geneva Convention on the POW's, and rejecting the explanation of Article 118 of the convention of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Asked about the grave situation in Lebanon, ‘Aziz said that Iraq believes that any military conflict or use of force by the Lebanese sides in Lebanon will be harmful to Lebanon's future, pointing out that the first victim of the fighting is the Lebanese people. He urged the Lebanese sides to hold a dialogue to solve political problems instead of using violence and fighting, which have caused loss and damage to this Arab country.

Joint Military Team With Iran To Meet 22 Feb

JN1802131589 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1230 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Feb (INA)—It was announced in Baghdad today that the first meeting of the joint military team between Iraq and Iran will be held in a border area between the two countries next Wednesday [22 February]. A press statement issued by the UN Iran-Iraq Military Observers Group [UNIIMOG] says that the joint military team will discuss issues related to monitoring the cease-fire.

Location of Meeting Specified

JN1902122689 Baghdad INA in English 1140 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, Feb 19, INA—The first meeting of the mixed Iraq-Iran military working group will be held at a site along the road of Khanaqin-Qasre-Shirin in the central sector next Wednesday.

A statement issued here by the spokesman of the United Nations Iraq-Iran Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG) said the meeting comes in accordance with a proposal by the U.N. secretary-general. The group comprises representatives of the Armed Forces of Iraq and Iran and its meeting will be chaired by the chief of military observer of UNIIMOG Major-General Slavko Jovic. Its main task will be considering issues relating to the maintenance of ceasefire between the two countries.

Statement Says Syria 'Assassinated' ALF Member

JN2002180489 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1737 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Feb (INA)—The Syrian regime's authorities last Wednesday assassinated Comrade 'Abd al-Karim Wafa'i, an ALF struggler. In a statement issued here today, the ALF Central Committee says the martyr, who was arrested by the henchmen of the Damascus ruler last March, had been subjected to severe torture before he was liquidated in the regime's prisons.

In its statement, the ALF urges the international bodies and human rights committees to carry out a quick and effective move in order to condemn this crime and all other crimes perpetrated by the Hafiz al-Asad regime against Arab strugglers. These crimes conflict with the simplest bases and values of humanitarian dealing and human rights, the statement adds. The martyr was born in Beirut in 1954, joined the ranks of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the ALF in 1973, and participated with his comrades in all militant battles against the Zionist enemy and the agent Syrian regime in defense of the Arab nation's causes.

'Source' Denies Military Activities in YAR

JN1902081489 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Feb (INA)—An authorized source at the Ministry of Culture and Information in the Republic of Iraq has denied the allegations published by the Beirut-based magazine AL-KIFAH AL-'ARABI regarding the existence of Iraqi military activities in the YAR. The source said that this news is baseless.

INA Chief Says REUTER POW Report 'Baseless'

JN1902101989 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0920 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Feb (INA)—The INA director general has reacted to a news report carried by REUTER on Thursday [16 February] on an Omani mediation effort to secure the release of "several thousands" of Egyptians held by Iran.

The director general said that saying that Iran is holding "several thousands" of [non-Iraqi] Arab POW's is without foundation. He added that the number of these Arab POW's does not exceed 213. He said that the figure "several thousands" contained in the report carried by REUTER is untrue, baseless, and based on exaggeration and browbeating.

The INA director general affirmed that the Iranian side will be held fully responsibile for the fate of the Iraqi and other Arab POW's in accordance with the third Geneva convention pertaining to the treatment of POW's and to their repatriation upon the cessation of hostilities.

REUTER quoted a diplomatic source as saying that the Sultanate of Oman is attempting to secure the release of several thousands of Egyptians held by Iran.

The INA director general affirmed that the Egyptians held by Iran are civilians who were performing civilian jobs in border villages, cities, and hamlets.

WAKH Cites AL-THAWRAH Criticism of Moscow TV

JN2002130789 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1235 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Feb (WAKH)—The Iraqi press today criticized Moscow television and accused it of distortion and fabrication. AL-THAWRAH, the organ of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says: A Soviet commentator called Zorin [name as received] fabricated events that did not take place in Iraq in a program on the crimes perpetrated by the Tehran regime and the executions carried out against the Iranian opposition forces.

This criticism comes 3 days before the arrival of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in Baghdad on the first visit [by a Soviet foreign minister] since the establishment of bilateral relations more than 30 years ago.

AL-THAWRAH charged that the Soviet commentator Zorin is a supporter of the Zionist and Western quarters. AL-THAWRAH says that had Iraq sought assistance from Zionist and Western media sources when dealing with the internal situation in the USSR we would have had more information than what he mentioned.

Arens To Meet Shevardnadze in Cairo 22 Feb

TA1802181589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Moshe Arens will leave for Cairo on Monday [20 February] and will meet with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, among others. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that the meeting was initiated by the Soviet foreign minister, who is currently on a tour of the Middle East to promote the peace process. The meeting between the two will take place on Wednesday.

During his visit to Cairo Minister Moshe Arens will also confer with President Mubarak and his Egyptian counterpart, 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid.

More on Forthcoming Meeting

TA1802194089 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Report by political correspondent Yig'al Goren—live]

[Text] Arye Levin, head of the Israeli consular delegation in Moscow, was summoned last week to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, where he was told that Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who would be leaving on a tour of the Middle East countries, wants to confer in Cairo with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens. The invitation was immediately relayed to Jerusalem, and in great secrecy it was decided that the meeting would be held in Cairo this coming Wednesday [22 February]. Arye Levin arrived from Moscow last night and will join the meeting in Cairo.

At the same time, Minister Arens approached his Egyptian counterpart with a proposal to hold meetings in Cairo with him and President Mubarak. Egypt approved the meetings over the weekend, and as early as this Monday Mr Arens will confer with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid.

Jerusalem attaches very great importance to these meetings, first and foremost in view of the Soviet Union's initiative to continue holding direct talks with Israel at the high level of foreign ministers. This will have been the second meeting between Shevardnadze and Arens in less than 2 months, this time in the Egyptian capital and during an important political tour of the area by the Soviet foreign minister.

Although Shevardnadze will not visit Israel, his extraordinary visit to this region in general and his invitation to Arens in particular attest to the fact that the Soviet Union is going into high gear in its handling of the conflict in the Middle East.

It should be pointed out in this context that the prime minister supports both the inclusion of the Soviet Union in the process and negotiations under the aegis of the two superpowers. Furthermore, President Mubarak's consent to confer with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens in Cairo attests to an improvement in the atmosphere between the two countries and the end of the tension caused by the Tabah affair.

This will be the first meeting between a senior Israeli personality and the Egyptian president in over 2 years, a fact attesting to Egypt's intention to cooperate with Israel in finding a solution to the conflict in the region.

In this context, it should be pointed out that PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat will also be coming to Cairo. Our monitor Mikha'el Gurdus has just reported that the meeting between Shevardnadze and 'Arafat was moved from Baghdad to Cairo. Hence, the representatives of four extremes involved in the conflict will be staying in the Egyptian capital this week.

There is no doubt that this will be a very special political week that will include meetings, which, if successful, may contribute to promoting the political process. All this is happening shortly before the prime minister's departure for his first meeting with the new U.S. Administration.

Optimism Expressed on Meeting

JN1902164889 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 1440 GMT 19 Feb 89

["Observation" by 'Ezra Shirazi]

[Text] The Middle East tour which Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze began the day before yesterday and which is expected to last 10 days raises cautious optimism in Israel, although the tour will not include Israel itself. Israeli optimism is basically due to the fact that Shevardnadze's tour is a practical and initial embodiment of the various signs and indications made by Moscow and which explain that the Kremlin, during leader Gorbachev's era, has become sincerely interested in contributing positively to bringing peace to the Middle East. It also indicates that it has relinquished its policy that kept the Middle East in a state of no war, no peace during the past decades, as a model to serve the Soviet interests or to deepen the Soviet presence in the Arab world, as the previous Kremlin rulers believed.

Israeli optimism is also due to the fact that the expected meeting in Cairo next Wednesday between the Soviet and Israeli foreign ministers was arranged in accordance with Moscow's initiative. This carries several signs and indications. First, this meeting is considered an additional step made by the USSR toward normalizing its relations with Israel. This is if we do not want to say that it is an advanced step toward the USSR's resumption of full diplomatic relations with Israel.

Second, this expected meeting indicates that the Kremlin plans to relinquish its flagrant automatic biased policy against Israel, and instead, it intends to adopt a more balanced, objective, and honest policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. Moreover, Moscow's initiative of arranging the meeting between Eduard Shevardnadze and Moshe Arens clearly indicates that the Soviet leadership realizes that the Kremlin's credibility regarding its declared desire to play a positive role in the process of making peace in the Middle East, and in fact, the Kremlin's credibility as a whole, depends to a large extent on the normalization of relations between the USSR and Israel.

What increases the optimism created by Shevardnadze's tour of our region is that this tour falls within the framework of understanding reached by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and former U.S. President Ronald Reagan, and their commitment at the summit meeting that was held between them in Moscow early last June, to start positive cooperation between the two superpowers to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, taking into consideration that what has been done in this regard by the new U.S. Administration under George Bush is in full harmony with the aforementioned commitments made by the two leaders, Reagan and Gorbachev.

Arens Meets With Mubarak; No Agreement Reached

TA2002204689 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 2030 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Report From Cairo by Natan Gutman]

[Text] The two main issues on which the Egyptian president and the Israeli foreign minister are still divided are Egypt's desire to convene an international Middle East peace conference and PLO participation in future negotiations. These two issues were discussed at length in the talks between Mubarak and Arens, which lasted some 75 minutes, but no agreement was reached. These issues were, in fact, the main subjects under discussion in the conversation.

President Mubarak and Foreign Minister Arens also discussed bilateral relations and the Tabah issue; these issues were much more marginal, however, and some agreement was reached on them.

Arens Against New Initiatives

TA2002212489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2100 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] A senior political source in Cairo said tonight that the Egyptian leadership made clear today to Foreign Minister Moshe Arens that Israel must seriously study the resolutions of the recent PNC meeting in Algiers. The same source said that Egypt wished to make clear to the Israeli foreign minister that it is convinced that now is the best time to exploit the opportunity to make progress in the peace process.

Minister Arens told reporters after his meeting with President Mubarak that he does not believe that the present time is suitable for new initiatives. Minister Arens said: I do not know if the ideas I presented to President Mubarak are new to him. The only thing certain is that the president listened to me attentively, just as I listened to him. Mr Arens added that he will raise the renewal of diplomatic relations between Israel and the USSR in his meeting with his Soviet counterpart on Wednesday.

Our Arab affairs correspondent Aharon Barne'a reports that the PLO representative in Cairo met this evening with an aide to the Soviet foreign minister, and later said the PLO considers the 'Arafat-Shevardnadze meeting as very important, as it reflects the coordination between the USSR and the PLO.

Arens: Talks 'Good Beginning'

TA2102060889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Interview with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens by political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami in Cairo; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Ben-'Ami] Minister Arens, your meeting with President Mubarak lasted more than an hour. How would you characterize that meeting?

[Arens] First of all, it provided an opportunity for me to get acquainted with the Egyptian president and conduct a lengthy and friendly tete-a-tete with him. I believe we covered the entire range of Middle East problems and the whole spectrum of the various aspects of the peace process. That is why I attribute great importance to that meeting.

[Ben-'Ami] Could you pinpoint the topics on which you disagreed, such as on the international conference and the PLO?

[Arens] Of course, there are some points over which we differ. It would have been very surprising if it transpired that we had reached an across-the-board agreement because he had persuaded me or the other way around in the first meeting. I think this meeting should be viewed as merely the beginning.

[Ben-'Ami] Was the PLO issue raised during your meeting?

[Arens] Among other things, of course. As I said, I believe we covered the entire range of issues pertaining to the Middle East.

[Ben-'Ami] And I assume that on this you differed.

[Arens] That would be a logical assumption.

[Ben-'Ami] Do you regard this meeting as a milestone in view of the fact that President Mubarak has not met with an Israeli minister from the Likud in over 7 years?

[Arens] I believe President Mubarak addresses the elected government in Israel regardless of the ruling party. Of course I never asked him about it, but there is no doubt in my mind that he realizes that the person who was elected prime minister is Yitzhaq Shamir and that he is a member of the Likud. Nor is the fact that I belong to the Likud concealed from the president.

[Ben-'Ami] Additionally, you belong to the extreme right, the hawkish camp in the Likud.

[Arens] I have never seen myself as an extremist. He told me: You are believed to be a hawk. I said: That is correct. And then he told me that he too is regarded as a hawk. That makes two of us.

[Ben-'Ami] Ultimately, are you pleased with the outcome of that meeting?

[Arens] I believe so. I think one must not overrate the results or the achievements. Besides, I never expected such a meeting—which was the first, although I assume not the last—to yield achievements or agreements or changes of views. As a start, however, I think it made a good beginning.

Diplomat: USSR 'No Longer Setting Conditions'

TA1902055889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Excerpt] A senior Soviet diplomat says that Moscow is no longer setting conditions for the renewal of diplomatic relations with Israel, but he stressed that there must be a change in the atmosphere. Our correspondent in Washington Shim'on Schiffer reports that this is according to Oleg Drokovskiy, who is in charge of Middle East affairs at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, and was previously head of the Middle East department at the Foreign Ministry in Moscow. He said that the USSR is interested in forming normal and friendly relations with Israel, just as it has with Syria.

In the latest contacts between Israeli and Soviet representatives in Washington, it has become apparent that the USSR no longer makes the renewal of diplomatic ties conditional on the convening of an international conference. [passage omitted]

Shamir Views Prospects for Talks With USSR

TA1902100489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0805 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Telephone interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Razi Barqay on "It Is All Talk" program—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Barqay] Our first guest on the "It Is All Talk" program is the prime minister. Good morning, sir.

[Shamir] Good morning.

[Barqay] We wanted to talk with you about many subjects, but of course we have to start with the events at the end of last week and, perhaps most importantly, the meeting between our foreign minister and his USSR counterpart. Do you foresee any breakthrough resulting from this meeting?

[Shamir] It is difficult to foresee a breakthrough resulting from every meeting. I usually view such meetings—talks between Shevardnadze and our foreign minister, and our foreign minister's talk with President Mubarak—as positive phenomena. It will enable our foreign minister to present Israel's positions and to listen to the positions of the USSR and Egypt.

[Barqay] There are hints emanating from Moscow that they are dropping the convening of an international conference as their condition for resuming ties with us. Have such hints also reached your office?

[Shamir] I have not heard such things exactly, but we will know more after we receive the foreign minister's report.

[Barqay] By the way, did you have any second thoughts about agreeing to hold the meeting in Cairo? Did you perhaps think to demand of Shevardnadze that the meeting be held in Israel?

[Shamir] There was no point in making such a demand, because it is obvious what his response would have been.

[Barqay] Mr Shamir, what will we tell the Soviet foreign minister?

[Shamir] I do not want to supplant our foreign minister. He will know what to tell Shevardnadze. He will present Israel's positions. Israel is interested in peace, while guarding its security and national interests. He will tell Shevardnadze what are our defense requirements, and what are the national interests and aspirations of the Israeli people in Eretz Yisra'el.

[Barqay] You have said many times in the past that you are prepared to give both the Russians and the Americans a role to play in a sort of mini-international conference or mini-international umbrella. Is that a precise definition?

[Shamir] No, it is not precise. There has, however, been an initiative by the U.S. secretary of state to have the USSR and the United States invite all the heads of governments in the Middle East—all the participants to the conflict—to Washington. A proposal would be presented there to Israel and the Arab countries to begin direct negotiations. I, of course, agreed to that initiative. If, thanks to that initiative, we could begin direct negotiations with the Arabs, I would support it with all my heart. I think the main objective at the moment in the Middle East must be to start negotiations.

[Barqay] Do you agree with the idea that in talks preliminary to negotiations the chairman would be the Americans and the Russians, perhaps in rotation?

[Shamir] We have not spoken about it. The initiative did not refer to chairmen, only to an invitation to the sides by the leaders of the United States and the USSR. At that meeting, the superpower leaders would propose that the sides begin negotiations, and direct negotiations would then begin. In such direct negotiations, there is no need for chairmen, but of course we can discuss all manner of details not discussed in the past.

[Barqay] While you send your foreign minister to Egypt, Labor party members—and not junior members—are meeting with people identified with the PLO in the territories. For some reason though, your reaction has not yet been heard.

[Shamir] Well, more important things have since occurred in Israel. First, the murder yesterday, during the Sabbath, demonstrates to the people of Israel more than anything else the real dangers we are facing. In the meantime, we see that the PLO and their supporters speak with knives, and all the running after them and the courting does not change the situation, certainly not for the better.

[Barqay] Do you plan to order Labor Party leaders to ban their members from meeting Al-Husayni?

[Shamir] Legally, I do not have the right to order that this or that man not meet with certain people living in the country, in this case in Jerusalem, but I believe that politically and nationally they only do harm.

[Barqay] You personally do not plan to meet with Faysal al-Husayni?

[Shamir] If we find it necessary from a political or security point of view to meet with somebody, the government could initiate such meetings, but it should not be a sort of national sport.

[Barqay] From your answer, I understand that you do not totally rule out a meeting with such a man.

[Shamir] You know that a statesman meets all sorts of people or representatives in the world in accordance with the country's interests. But I repeat, negotiations with hostile foreign elements are never up to the decision or consideration of mere civilians.

[Barqay] Mr Prime Minister, we are on a new radio program which, among other things, will try to face public figures with remarks they made in the past. With your permission, I would like to play for you and our listeners remarks you made several years ago about Eretz Yisra'el, and later ask you whether you would make them again today. Let us hear what you had to say.

[Begin Shamir recording] We, members of the nationalist movement, must imbibe in each youth, each Jew, the simple, elementary, deep awareness that Eretz Yisra'el is ours. Why? Because that is the way it is, without the need for explanations, just so. [end recording]

[Barqay] Prime Minister, there was a lot of pathos in those remarks. Would you make them today?

[Shamir] Certainly. Such remarks are justified. They are perhaps very emotional, because it is emotion that actually determines the basic national position of each nation. Logic adds reason, logic determines the tactical and other steps to achieve the objectives, but I certainly identify with each word I said.

[Barqay] You refer to logic, but nobody knows better than you that people like Shevardnadze and even U.S. President George Bush—whom you are going to meet in April—will not buy your remarks.

[Shamir] They will buy remarks that I will try to get them used to in political talks. What is appropriate to political rallies, however, is not necessarily appropriate to political talks. From the point of view of content though, I stand by whatever I said. I will not deny the fact that I think that way, believe in it, and am convinced of it.

[Barqay] They can, for instance, say to you: Mr Prime Minister, you are right, Eretz Yisra'el is yours as well [as the Palestinians].

[Shamir] I do not need to ask them or anybody else for acquiescence that Eretz Yisra'el is ours. I believe that it is the basic belief of each and every real Jew that Eretz Yisra'el is the country of the Jewish people. [passage omitted]

Peres: USSR Ties 'Soon'

TA2002122389 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1105 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Report on interview with Shim'on Peres, vice prime minister and finance minister, by Yo'av Aviv during Peres' tour of 'Akko on 20 February—recorded]

[Text] [Aviv] Shim'on Peres wished Foreign Minister Moshe Arens the best upon his departure for Cairo, provided that he comes back with positive results. Peres expects a resumption of diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union soon, but rejects, at least in part, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's plan. Peres rejects the part that deals with PLO participation in a preparatory peace conference that would also be attended by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

[Peres] I do not know what they would do on that occasion. I do not think that the PLO has proved that it is capable of making good on its promises, particularly insofar as terrorism is concerned. At the same time, I believe Israel should take the initiative. Israel should launch a real dialogue with the Palestinians, realizing that we will be unable to change them, and they will be unable to change us. We need to have negotiations in lieu of violence, but not one people instead of another.

[Aviv] Peres supported the contacts being held with PLO supporters from the territories, including Hanna Sinyurah and Faysal al-Husayni.

[Peres] I favor talks with any Palestinian who resides here, who is not involved in terrorism, and who can represent his people. This is regardless of what his views may be and regardless of his past. We must look to the future. In the wake of the sabotaging of the Jordanian option, we now have only the Palestinians. All those Likud ministers who point an accusing finger should first of all blame themselves for bringing about the present situation in which there is no Jordanian partner to talks, only a Palestinian partner.

Rabin on 'Change' in USSR

TA2002055889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin says that so far there has been no breakthrough in the investigation of the disappearance of paratrooper Avi Sasportas. Speaking to our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe, the defense minister said that if anyone believes that the PLO—whether from Tunis or from Syria—has put an end to terrorism, they are entertaining illusions. The assassination of the soldier in Jerusalem and the kidnapping of the soldier in the southern part of Israel were both premeditated attacks, stated the defense minister.

[Begin recording] [Rabin] Even though such things have happened before, they are different from the throwing of a stone or even a Molotov cocktail. They need to be more carefully planned. It cannot be done by someone simply driving along the roads in Israel, stopping, and picking up a soldier. I believe the same can also be said about those who ambushed the soldier and murdered him near Zion Gate.

My conclusion is that this activity was far more carefully planned, that it is terrorism, not violence. Although this is not new, as we have witnessed scores of such attempts in the past, both at stabbing individuals and kidnapping soldiers and civilians, it indicates that better-organized terrorism continues.

The third deduction [as heard] is that if anyone entertains the illusion that the PLO, from Tunis or from Syria, has terminated terrorism, they are making a grave mistake. This is definitely true insofar as the PLO from Tunis is concerned. There is no doubt in my mind that this is a manifestation of better-organized terrorist activity.

[Menashe] Regarding the Soviet activity in the region, Minister Rabin said that changes have indeed occurred in the Soviet Union. These changes were manifested, among other things, in the opening of the Jewish Cultural Center in Moscow, the pullout from Afghanistan, and in the slower process of rapprochement with Israel.

[Rabin] But the most important thing is my belief that the Soviet Union wants to prove that, contrary to the past, it can talk to all parties to the conflict and that in that respect it is not different from the United States. I think this is what is behind the initiative to visit this region and invite our foreign minister to Cairo—even though this is scheduled to take place shortly after a meeting with 'Arafat. Nonetheless, all this points to greater Soviet readiness to show openness and participate in the process. At the same time, one must exercise caution and not rush to conclude that the Soviets have grown closer to our positions. This is still a dream. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 0500 GMT on 20 February carries a similar report on Rabin, adding his comment on Knesset members meeting with Faysal al-Husayni that "I have nothing against talks as long as they are organized and don't look like a pitiful pilgrimage to a certain person."]

Rabin Denies Contacts With PLO on Lebanon

TA1902134589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has said that no direct or indirect negotiations are presently being conducted with the PLO on a cease-fire in Lebanon [as stated by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat on the CBS "60 Minutes" program broadcast on 19 February]. Replying to a question by a minister at today's Cabinet session, the defense minister said that various mediators had called on him last September to discuss the issue but that he had told them: We were not the ones who initiated terror in all its forms, and if terror stopped we would not be forced to take all the measures we are adopting today.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir voiced his reservations about the meetings with Faysal al-Husayni. He said that the bizarre run, as he put it, to meet the man harms Israel's image and causes damage. Before holding such meetings, a plan must be drafted that is acceptable to all sides. All the plans submitted so far have been rejected, Shamir said. Our correspondent Arye Golan reports that the issue was raised in the Cabinet session this morning and stirred an argument between Likud and Alignment ministers.

In anticipation of Foreign Minister Moshe Arens' trip to Cairo tomorrow, various Cabinet ministers demanded that a political plan be formulated before Arens' meeting with his Soviet counterpart and the Egyptian president. The prime minister replied that governments do not discuss political plans before every meeting with a foreign minister or head of state.

IDF Regrets Shooting of 2 UNIFIL Soldiers

TA2002144289 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1430 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Two Norwegian UNIFIL soldiers were wounded last night by IDF gunfire in the eastern sector of south Lebanon. Identifying some suspicious figures, an IDF force opened fire. It later transpired that these were UNIFIL soldiers. Our correspondent in the north Menahem Horowitz reports that Major General Yosi Peled, commander of the Northern Command, has appointed an investigating officer with the rank of colonel who has begun looking into the circumstances of the incident. At the same time, the IDF expressed its regret to UNIFIL headquarters.

Palestinians Get 'Threatening' PFLP Letters

JN1802102989 Jerusalem Television Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Palestinian figures in the territories today denied some Israeli media reports that the Palestinian figures who participated in a meeting with the Labor Party representatives, including political advisers, have formed a representative political group comprising the Palestinian factions with the exception of the PFLP and Hamas. These figures told our correspondent that, if such reports are true, they will regard this meeting as an attempt to create an alternative leadership to the PLO.

On another level, the PFLP issued a statement in Beirut denouncing meetings between Palestinian figures and Israeli Labor Party representatives.

A number of Palestinian figures in Nabulus and Ramallah have received threatening letters signed by the PFLP warning them against meeting with Israeli Labor Party representatives.

'Jamming' of Al-Quds Radio Reportedly Resumed

TA1902054989 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 Feb 89 p 8

[Report by Joel Greenberg]

[Text] Israel has resumed jamming broadcasts of Al-Quds, the radio station in southern Syria broadcasting messages of encouragement to the uprising, and operated by Ahmad Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command. Since the jamming was stopped about a week ago, the station enjoyed increasing popularity among Palestinians.

Rabin: PLO Responsible for Murder, Kidnapping

TA1902180789 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1730 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin says the PLO is responsible for the murder of the yeshiva student in Jerusalem and the kidnapping of a soldier in the south. Rabin was addressing a delegation of Orthodox Movement rabbis from the United States.

When asked about the murder of soldier Shlomi Kohen near Zion Gate in Jerusalem and the kidnapping of the soldier in the south, Rabin stated that he considers the PLO responsible for both events, since he believes that both attacks were to some extent premeditated. If anybody believed the statements by the PLO in Tunis that its men had renounced terror, the defense minister said, the kidnapping in the south and the murder of a soldier in civilian clothing near Zion Gate came to demonstrate that this was an illusion. In both cases, one can tell that these were classical attacks by a terrorist organization.

Rabin noted that the attack near Zion Gate had been planned by somebody who saw that the area was not being watched by the police and who carried out an ambush. As for the second case, it looks like a kidnapping, Rabin said.

Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories

1 Killed in Nabulus Clashes

TA1702201889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Eighteen-year-old 'Amid Husni Turk was killed this afternoon in Kafr al-Dik, near Nabulus. Army sources say the IDF is investigating the report on the youth's death. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that there were clashes between local inhabitants and soldiers today in the village. Locals say the army operated in the village to restore order and paint over graffiti.

Five other locals, including an 11-year-old girl injured in the head, and a youth from the Al-Duhayshah refugee camp, were wounded this afternoon in the Nabulus area in clashes with soldiers.

Curfew Imposed on Tulkarm

TA1802070489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0600 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] This morning a curfew was imposed on Tulkarm to prevent disturbances. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that this is part of the preparatory steps taken in anticipation of the 3-day general strike planned to start tomorrow. Many detentions were also made in Judaea and Samaria this week.

Youth Dies of Wounds

TA1802102689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Ahmad Yazuri, a 15-year-old Rafah resident, died last night in Tel Hashomer Hospital. He was wounded during riots in the city early last week. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that Yazuri's brother was killed a year ago during a violent clash in Rafah.

The night curfew, imposed on the Gaza Strip at the beginning of the uprising, was lifted. Our correspondent reports that this step was taken with the background of the 3-day general strike expected to start tomorrow in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, and is intended to allow laborers to leave for work in Israel.

Jewish Youth Stabbed to Death

TA1802193589 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Excerpt] A 21-year-old yeshiva student from Jerusalem was murdered this afternoon near Zion Gate. He was stabbed in the heart while walking with a friend outside the Old City walls. The murderer and several Arab youths who were with him fled the scene. Dozens of Arabs have been detained for interrogation. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Journalist Held

TA1802202689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Sam'an Khuri of East Jerusalem, a journalist working for AFP, was placed under administrative detention this evening. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that Khuri took part in this week's meeting with Deputy Finance Minister Yosi Beilin and other Alignment personalities, which was also attended by Faysal al-Husayni.

A senior military source told our correspondent that there is no connection between Khuri's detention and his meeting with the Alignment members. Khuri has been detained several times in the past and has spent 5 months under arrest since the beginning of the uprising.

4 Wounded by IDF Gunfire

TA1902060389 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Four Gaza Strip youths were shot and wounded by IDF gunfire last night during stoning incidents. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that two of the wounded are from the Jabalyah refugee camp, one from Al-Shati', and one from the Shabura neighborhood of Rafah.

A 3-day general strike begins in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip today. The Civil Administration took steps to enable laborers to leave for work in Israel despite the strike.

At dawn, the curfew imposed yesterday on the town of Tulkarm to prevent disturbances was lifted. On the other hand, a curfew was imposed on two Rafah neighborhoods. Relatives of the youth who died of his wounds at Tel Hashomer Hospital live in one of the neighborhoods.

'Full' Strike in West Bank

TA1902104989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] There is a full commercial, transportation, and educational strike throughout Judaea and Samaria today as part of the 3-day strike scheduled by the Unified National Command of the Uprising. Judaea and Samaria schools have already been closed for many weeks.

The Civil Administration reported that Gaza laborers left for work in Israel as usual today, although the flow of employees from Judaea and Samaria was only partial.

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the IDF has beefed up its presence in the territories and that hundreds were detained last week as part of preemptive measures to prevent disturbances. A curfew was imposed on the Al-Shaykh Radwan neighborhood of Gaza as well as the village of Bayt Hanun in the Gaza Strip, purportedly to impose order.

The curfew clamped yesterday on two Rafah neighborhoods remains in effect, whereas the curfew imposed yesterday on Tulkarm has been lifted.

[Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew on 19 February carries an unattributed report on page 2 that "at around 2000 last night a Molotov cocktail was hurled at a minibus traveling near the 'Aqabat Jabr refugee camp south of Jericho." The report adds that "large IDF units are searching the area."]

Nabulus Jurists Resign

TA1902131289 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 19 Feb 89 p 5

[Report by Oren Kohen]

[Text] Six judges belonging to the Nabulus court system, as well as its district attorney, resigned yesterday following an order from the Unified National Command of the Uprising in the Nabulus area. Under the current situation, the Nabulus court system is on the verge of collapse.

Arab sources reported that among those resigning are Judge Muhammad Amin al-Sa'd, president of the Nabulus District Court; and District Judges 'Imad Salim, Riyad 'Abd-al-Hadi, and 'Uthman al-Sulh. Judges Taysir Abu Zahir and Rafiq Zuhd resigned from the Magistrate's Court. District Attorney Nabil al-Zu'bi also quit his post.

The Unified National Command of the Uprising in Nabulus demanded that the judges resign because of the connection between the judicial system and the Civil Administration.

HADASHOT previously reported that popular courts have been set up by the uprising leadership to serve as arbiters for settling disputes between the residents. As a matter of fact, court activity has decreased ever since tl Arab policemen quit their jobs, and hardly any criminhe complaints are being submitted. ial

Youth Wounded in Janin

TA1902134789 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] An Arab youth who attacked a border policem: at a roadblock was shot and wounded this afternoon an Janin. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that tlin wounded youth was taken to the hospital in 'Afula. It hhe been learned that the man had been wanted by tlas security forces. he

Arab Given 'Heavy' Sentence

TA1902162889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] The Nabulus military court today meted out heavy sentence to 23-year-old Yusuf Mahmud Milha a from the village of Shuwaykah near Tulkarm. He wm convicted of stone throwing, participating in distuas bances, and belonging to Fatah. He was given a 3-yerr- prison term and an additional 2-year suspended sear tence. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that tn- judge, Captain Ilan Katz, said that, to deter rioters, ithe necessary to hand out heavy sentences. is

3 Activists Detained

TA1902172689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] The security forces today placed three Palestini: activists from East Jerusalem under administratian detention for 6 months. Our correspondent Moshe Nuve baum reports that the three are journalists Nabil Julas- and 'Abd-al-Latif Rif and activist 'Adnan al-Shalalidani h.

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the Palestini: Journalists' Association issued a communique thn evening denouncing the arrest of the journalists and tis measures taken by the authorities against the Arhe journalists and press in East Jerusalem. ab

Rafah Resident Wounded

TA1902174889 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] A resident of Rafah suffered moderate woun after being hit by a plastic bullet fired by IDF soldiersds rioters and people who violated the curfew this aftat noon. The wounded man was hospitalized in Al-Nar- Hospital in Khan Yunus. [passage omitted] ir

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1705 GM on 19 February reports that "from hospitals and variqT other places in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strus p, reports have arrived of 10 people who were wounded today in clashes with soldiers. Military sources said that four people were wounded in Judaea and Samaria and one in Rafah."]

Search Spreads for Soldier

TA1902175289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] At sunset this evening, the search for the soldier Avi Sasportas [who was last seen at a road junction near Ashqelon on 16 February] changed direction. The search has now spread to all parts of the country, with an emphasis on Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip and the cities of Gaza and Hebron in particular. Our correspondent Rina Matzli'ah, who is with the command in charge of the search, reports that this decision was made in the wake of intelligence activity. The command in charge of the search emphasizes that no sign has yet been found indicating that Avi Sasportas has been hurt. The police commissioner and commander of the Southern District are currently at the scene of the search.

2 Wounded by Stones

TA1902205589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] This evening there were two stone-throwing incidents in the Jerusalem area in which a soldier and a driver were slightly wounded. Our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that a civil defense soldier was slightly wounded in the head by stones thrown at him in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City. The soldier was treated on the spot and released.

The driver of an Israeli vehicle was slightly wounded in the Al-Ram junction north of Jerusalem. The driver lost control and ran into a traffic island. He was slightly wounded and evacuated to the Hadassah Mt Scopus Hospital. Police and border police forces are currently searching the areas in which the incidents occurred.

Further on 19 Feb Strike

TA2002084989 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 20 Feb 89 pp 1, 10

[Report by Joel Greenberg and Mikhal Sela']

[Excerpts] Troops shot and wounded eight Palestinians yesterday in clashes on the first day of a 72-hour general strike in the territories, military sources said. Palestinians reported 11 shot and eight needing hospitalization from beatings. [passage omitted]

Injuries have decreased recently because patrolling soldiers have been ordered to avoid any unnecessary shooting, an IDF spokesman told THE JERUSALEM POST.

In yesterday's violence, a 25-year-old Janin man was shot and wounded when he tried to attack a border policeman at a roadblock, military sources said. In

Janin, a 22-year-old was wounded in the leg. A 20-year-old was shot in Hebron. At the Balatah refugee camp, a 35-year-old woman was wounded by bullet fragments. [passage omitted]

A Palestinian source in Bayt Hanun said that during the curfew an unknown number of Palestinians were arrested. He said also that street cleaning and removing slogans from walls was carried out by the villagers under military supervision. [passage omitted]

[In a report on page 2 by Ori Nir and Eytan Rabin on 20 February, Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew adds that "two new leaflets were circulated in Ramallah yesterday: One on behalf of the Ramallah branch of the Unified National Command of the Uprising, and the other by the Ramallah chapter of the DFLP. The first calls on the inhabitants to show steadfastness and determination opposite Israel's plans to crush the uprising through political means. The latter, by George Habash's organization, calls on the locals to escalate the uprising."]

'Terrorist' Squads Uncovered

TA2002053189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] The security forces have uncovered a five-member terrorist group in the Jerusalem area who are planning to kidnap and murder a soldier, and snatch the personal weapon of a local policeman. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that last night the security forces boarded up the home of two of the squad members in a north Jerusalem neighborhood. They were also found guilty of setting Israeli vehicles on fire and throwing Molotov cocktails.

A four-man squad of terrorists was uncovered in Janin. Its members threw firebombs at a military vehicle. Another squad was uncovered in the village of Hawwarah in the Nablus area. The security forces demolished the home of a Janin detainee, while in Hawwarah part of the home of another detainee was sealed up.

3-Day Strike Enters 2d Day

TA2002062989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0600 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] In Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District, the general strike is entering its 2d day. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the Military Government this morning clamped a curfew on the Sabra neighborhood of Gaza to allow for police activity and impose order. The residents are cleaning up the streets. Meanwhile, the curfew imposed on the Al-Shaykh Radwan activity, where similar activity took place yesterday, has been lifted. The curfew on Bayt Hanun and several Rafah neighborhoods is still in effect.

Hamas Leadership in Gaza Jails

TA2002091889 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Feb 89 p 2

[Report by Eytan Rabin]

[Text] All of the leaders of Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement) in the territories have been placed in detention in Gaza Strip jails. This transpires from a charge sheet submitted to the Gaza Strip military court.

The Hamas leaders have been under detention for some months but only now, following intensive investigations, have charges against them been submitted.

The indictment reveals initial details on the organization, its modes of operation, and its senior leaders.

The indictment, submitted by Military Prosecutor Second Lieutenant [rank as published] 'Omer Ben-Hayim, notes that the organization's leader is Shaykh Ahmad Yasin. He is supported by a consultative council that includes Shaykh Salah Shihadah from Bayt Hanun, 'Isa Mashari of Rafah, Hamid Sham'a from Al-Shati', Ibrahim Yazuri from Gaza, 'Abd al-Fath Duran from Al-Nusayrat, and Dr 'Abd al-'Aziz Ghaddasi from Khan Yunus.

The indictment notes that the defendants established Hamas in December 1987 with the aim of including the religious organizations' activities in the general framework of the uprising. They were appointed by the organization to handle the entire Gaza Strip and, together with Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, worked to establish ties even beyond the Gaza Strip proper, in Judaea, Samaria, and East Jerusalem.

The charge sheet further claims that the defendants began to circulate leaflets issued by the organization immediately upon its establishment, employing a complex distribution network. They printed more than 100,000 copies of the organization's leaflets, as well as brochures detailing the organization's goals. These were distributed throughout the territories.

Hamas leaders, who have been detained by the security forces, received the large sum of approximately 20,000 dinars to purchase cars, duplicate pamphlets, and conduct other forms of activity.

The charge sheet also mentions British singer Cat Stevens. The military prosecutor maintains that Ibrahim Yazuri, one of Hamas' leaders, attended a meeting between Hamas chief Ahmad Yasin and singer Stevens in which the shaykh tried to persuade Stevens to contribute to the organization.

[Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew on 20 February carries a front-page report by Uri'el Ben-'Ami and Ayelet Mazor, adding that "Hamas yesterday called for intensified riots during the general strike that began yesterday."]

General Strike 'Complete'

TA2002163489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Three inhabitants of Judaea and Samaria were shot and wounded by IDF gunfire during stoning incidents, our correspondent Arye Gus reports. Casualties have been reported in 'Anabta, Bayta, and Janin.

The general strike ordered by the Unified National Command of the Uprising continues in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. The strike is complete and is expected to end tomorrow.

Fatah Members Sentenced

TA2102061789 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] A Gaza military court has handed down heavy sentences to four residents of the Al-Burayj refugee camp. They were found guilty of being members of the Fatah Force-17 terror organization and of having thrown firebombs at army patrols. Nineteen-year-old Samih Muhammad was sentenced to 17 years; Rizaq Hassan Sus, aged 18, received 15 years; 'Abd al-Latif Abu Awidah 14 [years], and Ahmad Milham Awad 12 years.

General Strike Continues

TA2102073189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0600 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] This morning the IDF imposed a curfew on the Al-Shati' refugee camp in the Gaza Strip and on the Brazil suburb of Rafah. Curfews on a number of Rafah neighborhoods remain in force. The curfews on Bayt Hanun and the Sabra neighborhood in Gaza were lifted. Two residents of Rafah and a woman from Khan Yunus who were injured by IDF fire yesterday during disturbances were brought to Al-Nasir Hospital in Khan Yunus. A doctor at the hospital said that Sami Muhammad Abu Jum'a from the village of Bani Suhaylah died of natural causes. Abu Jum'a's body was brought to the hospital but later snatched by his family. The doctor said that no signs of violence or bullet marks were found on his corpse.

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the general strike is being observed in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. The strike is scheduled to end tonight.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 21 February reports that "yesterday the military court in Gaza sentenced 16 residents accused of rioting, hurling stones and firebombs at Israeli vehicles, and endangering security in the area. Ten of the accused were sentenced to prison terms and fines."]

Reportage on Visit of Soviet Foreign Minister

Shevardnadze Arrives, Speaks

JN1902165689 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Amman—USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze arrived in Amman today from Damascus on an official visit to Jordan, during which he will meet with His Majesty King Husayn, Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i, and a number of senior officials.

Shevardnadze praised the role played by Jordan, under His Majesty King Husayn, in the Arab and international arenas. He said: We, in the USSR, highly appreciate the firm and principled Jordanian stand on the Middle East issue and in the international arena. I am honored to convey a message to His Majesty King Husayn from His Excellency President Mikhail Gorbachev on the most important international issues, among which, of course, are the Middle East issue and the peace march to settle this issue.

He pointed out: The Soviet leadership attaches extreme importance to my visit to Jordan, not only because it is the first of its kind, but also because of the existence of very important issues the USSR desires to discuss in detail with the Jordanian leadership. He said that he will discuss with His Majesty King Husayn the Middle East issue, in addition to means of promoting relations between the USSR and Jordan.

He described his talks with His Excellency Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and with the senior Syrian officials as good and fruitful.

Shevardnadze's visit to Jordan is part of a tour of Syria, Egypt, Iraq, and Iran.

He was received at the airport by Marwan al-Qasim, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; senior Foreign Ministry officials; the Soviet ambassador in Amman, and the embassy staff

Meets With Counterpart

JN1902205189 Amman Television Service in English 2000 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] The deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Mr Marwan al-Qasim, conferred with the Soviet foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, this evening.

Mr al-Qasim explained that Jordan seeks a political settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict based on Security Council Resolution 242, which states the inadmissibility of the acquisition of other peoples' lands by force and calls for Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories and guaranteeing the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. He pointed out that Jordan and the Soviet Union maintain identical views on this matter.

Mr al-Qasim praised the Soviet Union's support of the Arab rights, its rejection of occupation, and its ceaseless endeavor to achieve a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian problem and a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Mr al-Qasim noted that the Arabs have adopted a unified position and have responded to the Soviet Union's demand of forging such a position. He said that this unified Arab position seeks just peace based on the principles incorporated in Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which should be put into effect through an international peace conference on the Middle East.

Visits King, Prime Minister

JN1902190089 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received at Al-Nadwah Palace a short while ago Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who arrived in Amman this afternoon. He handed his majesty a letter from USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev on international developments including the Middle East problem. The meeting, which was still in progress as we came on the air, was attended by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the prime minister, the Royal Court chief, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and his majesty the king's political advisor. On the Soviet side, the talks were attended by Shevardnadze's delegation.

Shevardnadze also called on the prime minister in his office this evening, with deputy prime ministers Thuqan al-Hindawi and Marwan al-Qasim in attendance. They reviewed the latest regional developments, particularly those related to the Mideast question. They stressed that they have identical views on the best route to a just, comprehensive, durable settlement in the Middle East, namely convening a UN-sponsored international conference attended by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and all of the parties to the dispute including the PLO.

The talks also took in Lebanon and the means to work out a solution that safeguards the country's independence and territorial integrity. They discussed bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and how to further develop them in various fields. The meeting was attended by the USSR ambassador in Amman and Shevardnadze's delegation along with the head of the prime minister's office.

More on Talks With King

JN2002070289 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 0500 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Amman—His Majesty King Husayn received at the Al-Nadwah Palace last night USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze who arrived in Amman earlier yesterday. Mr Shevardnadze conveyed to his majesty the king a message from the Soviet leader dealing with the most important current issues, headed by the Middle East issue. He also relayed to his majesty the greetings of Mr Gorbachev, who praised King Husayn's role in resolving world peace issues, particularly the Middle East issue.

During the meeting, His Majesty King Husayn explained Jordan's stand on the Middle East issue in general, and the Palestine question in particular. His majesty stressed the importance of the role that can be played by the UN Security Council permanent member states to solve the Middle East issue in a just and permanent manner through the convocation of an international conference for peace under the UN umbrella. He referred to the positive role that can be played by the Soviet Union, especially since it is the other side which has contributed toward effecting an international detente, which has begun to reflect itself positively on many international circumstances and the resolution of regional disputes.

His majesty expressed satisfaction with the development of Jordanian-USSR relations in various fields.

Shevardnadze reviewed the USSR's stands on the convocation of an international peace conference, as well as the practical measures that the Soviet Union believes must be taken to convene such a conference. He stressed that the new situation in the region creates new peace opportunities, which must be exploited.

The meeting was attended by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the prime minister, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, his majesty the king's political adviser, and the deputy prime minister and foreign minister. On the Soviet side, the meeting was attended by the delegation accompanying Mr Shevardnadze and the Soviet ambassador in Amman.

Holds News Conference, Departs

JN2002080489 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 0500 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze has described his talks with His Majesty King Husayn as very useful and constructive. He said: I depart Jordan with my heart full of feelings of satisfaction as a result of these talks. In a press conference before departing Amman for Cairo last night, Shevardnadze added that he discussed with his majesty the king many international issues and regional disputes, particularly the Middle East issue and the peace march to solve this issue in light of the major trends that have recently appeared on the international scene.

He added: My talks with His Majesty King Husayn are a natural continuation of the dialogue started between the Jordanian and Soviet leaderships during the meeting of December 1987 between His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President Gorbachev in the Kremlin. Shevardnadze affirmed that Jordanian and Soviet leaderships hold almost identical viewpoints on all major issues to settle the Middle East problem, including the issue of convening a substantial international conference as well as the preparatory process for such a conference.

He added that the Jordanian and Soviet sides have agreed on the need to intensify efforts to prepare for the convocation of an international conference through continuous, regular, and active contacts between the two countries. Within this context, he referred to the need to activate the UN Security Council's role, especially that of the permanent member states, the UN secretary general, and parties to the conflict. He said there are many positive signs and developments which make it possible to convene an international conference. He indicated that attention must currently focus on the preparatory stage for an international conference. He said this stage needs 9 months.

Shevardnadze explained that the Palestinians and Arabs have made positive and important contributions to the convocation of an international conference and resolving the Middle East issue. He indicated that many matters now depend on the Israeli stand, which he will explore during his meeting with the Israeli foreign minister in Cairo. He indicated that the convocation of an international conference is the strategic goal which must be aimed by all parties. He said this goal cannot be reached without serious preparation.

Responding to a question on the U.S.-Soviet coordination to solve the Middle East crisis, he said the two countries have a joint understanding on some aspects concerning the Middle East issue. In this regard, he recalled his comment on the Shultz plan when he said that the plan contained some points acceptable by all parties to the conflict, and some unacceptable points as well. He said he believes that no state can propose a plan acceptable for all sides. He indicated that what is currently required is a collective work to support efforts to convene an international conference.

Concluding his press conference, Shevardnadze said he will meet with PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Cairo. He was seen off at the airport by Marwan al-Qasim, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and the Soviet ambassador in Amman and embassy staff.

U.S., UK Embassies Deny Moves to West Beirut

NC1702183589 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] A responsible source in the British Embassy has denied reports that Ambassador Allan John Ramsey moved to West Beirut along with the embassy staff. The source stressed that none of the embassy employees had been injured, despite the security incidents that took place in the vicinity of the embassy. In another development, a U.S. diplomat working at the U.S. Embassy, who declined to give his name, pointed out that those who were evacuated will return once the security situation permits. He denied that any diplomat had moved out of the eastern area.

15 U.S. Employees Flown Out

NC1702203589 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 2000 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] In a noteworthy development, three U.S. military helicopters have flown 15 employees of the U.S. Embassy in 'Awkar [in East Beirut] to Cyprus because of the security situation in the eastern area. Confirming this, U.S. State Department Spokesman Charles Redman said the U.S. Government is now closely watching the situation and will continue to do so. He noted that the recent fighting and the aggravating situation in the eastern area demonstrate and confirm to the Lebanese people the urgent need to restore legitimate national institutions.

Hostages Reported Moved From Al-Shiyah to Sfayr

JN1802152489 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD AL-USBU'I in Arabic 16 Feb 89 p 1

[Text] AL-ITTIHAD has learned that during the past 24 hours a number of foreign hostages were moved from the Al-Shiyah area in Beirut's southern suburb to two positions close to contact lines in the Sfayr area under the control of Hizballah. A high-ranking security source has told AL-ITTIHAD that this operation has postponed the implementation of the planned Syrian military deployment in the southern suburb.

6 Ja'ja' Escorts Hurt in Assassination Attempt

NC2002141889 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] The motorcade of Samir Ja'ja', commander of the Phalangist Forces, came under gunfire from armed men lying in ambush for him in the Jisr al-Basha area. Ja'ja' had been on his way to the Defense Ministry at Al-Yarzah to meet with General Michel 'Awn. A 5-minute clash ensued between the gunmen and the Ja'ja' guards. The clash injured six of the Ja'ja' escorts, and they were then taken to the hospital. Ja'ja' did arrive at Al-Yarzah where he met with Gen 'Awn.

Meeting Attempts Army, Lebanese Forces Mediation

'Awn Refuses To Participate

NC1702125389 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Patriarch Nasrallah Sfayr is scheduled to chair a meeting at the seat of the patriarchate in Bkirki at 1430 this afternoon. Recent events in the eastern areas will be examined and a formula to end the deterioration of the security situation between the Army and the Lebanese Forces will be sought. General Michel 'Awn made his position on attending this meeting clear at a press conference which he held at the Defense Ministry in Al-Yarzah this morning. He announced that he would not participate in the Bkirki meeting, and emphasized that he would not send anyone to represent him at this meeting.

Gen 'Awn accused Samir Ja'ja', commander of the Lebanese Forces, of trying to perpetrate a second Ihdin [massacre of Tony Franjiyah and his family in 1978] against his family. 'Awn said that he would fight to liberate the Lebanese people in the eastern area from hegemony. He strongly attacked the Lebanese Forces, referring to the taxes which they impose. He asked about the budget of the Lebanese Forces and described their members as fascists and their activities as those of Mafia gangs.

Responding to a question, 'Awn said: We are responsible for a state. If they [the Lebanese Forces] want a state, then let them tell us. We will have an answer for them.

Gen 'Awn viewed the events of the past few days as a clear attempt to usurp power, under the slogan of preserving society. He said: The events which took place are merely excuses and pretexts to implement this plan. He added: The features of this plan became evident when the army centers were surrounded, its supply routes were cut off, and when 13 army soldiers fell in their positions or in ambushes which were laid for them.

'Awn said that the crossing points are now passable, free of charge, and that there will be no taxes other than those imposed legally. He added that taxes in the areas where the army is deployed have been abolished and they will be abolished in virtually all others areas. 'Awn gave figures for the illegal taxes which the Lebanese Forces collect from the citizens.

'Awn on Plan To 'Usurp Power'

NC1702205389 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] General Michel 'Awn disclosed today that the Phalangist forces had prepared a plan to usurp power, hinting that Bkirki [seat of the Maronite patriarch] failed to adopt a clear-cut position on what happened and is still happening. Gen 'Awn held a news conference in which he gave his own account of the clashes, how they started, and why he accepted the cease-fire. He said:

A military police patrol was ambushed in Monte Verde [in East Beirut], and some were killed and wounded. All in all we lost 13, and this includes three military policemen who were killed in the Monte Verde ambush. The situation quickly exploded militarily throughout the main positions in the area, from Al-Madfun, Suq al-Gharb, and Kafr Shima until Monte Verde. All the roads were closed before the Army. As for our martyrs, three fell in the Monte Verde ambush, three others fell at the entrance to Suq al-Gharb, and Captain Fahmy 'Uwaydat fell in the Saint Therese area. Our martyrs did not fall in Beirut, at the Military Council, in Al-Ashrafiyah, or in 'Ayn al-Rummanah. They fell at their own posts.

Gen 'Awn added: It transpired that the operation involved a siege of the Army, the obstruction of its control, and the imposition of power. The interesting part was the dispatch of a group from the Lebanese Forces' elite special units. I would like to ask who made that decision, and I wonder how much money is being spent to train these units? They were sent with 10 troop carriers under the command of an insane person named Mak Mak to Al-Rabiyah to carry out another Ihdin [place where Tony Franijiyah and his family were killed in 1978] in my house. Is it for this that taxes are paid? Who made the decision? Was it the Lebanese front or the Lebanese Forces Command Council? I would like to know what kind of a crazy person would [word indistinct] responsibilities. Naturally the force made up of 10 carriers was destroyed. Five of the carriers were burned, and the remaining five are still in the barracks and are serviceable. This is the military aspect. And, of course, some skirmishes took place, but those are minor details. It was the attempt that we foiled.

Then appeals were made to declare a cease-fire and restore calm. Some of the appeals spoke of the combatants. We are not combatants. We are the legitimate armed forces defending Lebanon against the illegitimate gunmen who wanted to usurp power. This must be perfectly understood by everyone in any future dealings with us. We do not accept appeals from anyone that equate us with others.

Gen 'Awn added: At the request of some parties, in order to clarify matters for public opinion, and in an attempt to alleviate tension, we held our fire and adopted some measures today to facilitate the day-to-day affairs for the people. However, the problem still exists, and it needs a radical and final solution. It is the problem of a state that has lived with some anomalies for some time. We lived with them, but then the situation reached a peak, and this is unacceptable. The anomalies must go. For this reason, we have abolished taxes along the crossing points, and they are now open free of charge. The national fund denied this yesterday and questioned our measures, claiming that no taxes were collected at 'Ayn al-Dulb, Monte Verde, or the Museum Crossing Points. What I learned recently is that they first give receipts and then demand money, challenging anyone to talk about it. They set up roadblocks as a cover to blackmail people. Levies at the crossing points are abolished for good. The real estate office in B'abda will not levy any taxes on the public. No taxes will be levied in the areas where the Army is present or which the Army is now in control of.

In response to a question, Gen 'Awn said: Those who tried to get in touch with me said: 'Awn does not answer anybody. But we answered them all and explained to them the problem from all angles. Let them kindly tell us what they want. The problem has surfaced, and we have been subjected to an attack. We tried to answer the attack, but then appeals started coming in. Now they are meeting in Bkirki. Let us see what will happen. I am not asking for advice from anyone. I want positions and not advice or demands. The question is still open. Whether the battle will continue or not depends on the availability of a solution.

In response to another question, we hold the Lebanese Forces responsible for the bloodshed and the damage to the houses. They have to repair the houses and pay reparations to the families of the victims from the taxes they collect. He added: I am not aware of any demands on the part of the Lebanese Forces, because there is nothing to demand. We are not asking for details on a 10-meter withdrawal or advance. What is required is a choice between a state or a statelet. We are responsible for a state, and our position is clear. If they want a state within the state, let them say so, and we will give them an answer then. We will not discuss the details before a choice is made.

In response to a question on the cooperation that existed between the Army and the Lebanese Forces, Gen 'Awn said: There had been cooperation and understanding, but it was some sort of a ploy. I outlined a position in Tunis and returned with some success, and the people appreciated it. There was a positive response and understanding on the part of the Arabs. I thank all those involved in the Arab committee. Perhaps it was my position in Tunis that caused all this. However, there is a price for success.

Gen 'Awn added: Who else is stifling the freedoms in the eastern area other than the Lebanese Forces? In whose name do the Lebanese Forces register the property they buy with the people's money? Where is the budget? In whose names is the property registered and where? He added: They are a failure, and they could do anything under the cover of safeguarding society. They (?robbed) the students in the vocational school. You can ask the nuns' societies about it. They are getting paid by the cabarets, where there is plenty of licentiousness and prostitution. They also collect money from those brought from abroad to work here.

Gen 'Awn said the Lebanese state's ports represent the main source of finance for the Lebanese Forces, which is imposing heavy taxes. The monthly income of the real estate departments in B'abda, Juniyah, Ju Bayl, and

Beirut is estimated at approximately 400 million Lebanese pounds. The citizen's dealings were taxed as follows: A 2-percent tax on the building of houses, as assessed by a representative from the Lebanese Forces; a 2-percent tax on the registration of plots of land, again as assessed by their representatives; a 2-percent tax for a stamp on documents, as if it is a sales tax; a 1-percent tax on (?inheritance) deeds; a 0.1 percent tax on insurance plans; a 2,500 Lebanese pounds on (word indistinct) dealings. As for the taxes collected at the crossing points, they are as follows: 15,000 Lebanese pounds on trucks and 7,000 on pickup trucks. The factories and plants used to pay 15,000 each.

Add to this, Beirut port's monthly income estimated at approximately 100 million Lebanese pounds, as well as other import deals.

Gen 'Awn added: There are other revenues from invisible sources such as drug trafficking, which produce a lot of money. There are also other undeclared sources of revenues such as foreign aid. Furthermore, professionals, such as officers, lawyers, etc, used to pay a monthly tax of 2,000 each. The shops paid 4,000 pounds each. Gen 'Awn added that the amount of taxes imposed before 23 September 1988 represents 80 percent of the amount shown in the aforementioned list, with the exception of the real estate taxes.

Officer Killed by Gunmen

NC1702143389 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] An Army officer was killed, and a number of military men were wounded at the Al-Hayik circle today. The guidance directorate of the Army command in Al-Yarzi issued the following statement: While an Army force was withdrawing from the Al-Hayik circle this afternoon, in implementation of the cease-fire agreement, some gunmen opened fire at the withdrawing force. Lieutenant Joseph Al-Bitar was killed, and other military men were wounded. The statement adds: This incident shows the extent of the gunmen's carelessness in their commitment to the cease-fire agreement.

Forces Resume Fighting

NC1702161589 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1547 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Clashes have resumed in the eastern area between the Army and the Lebanese Forces. Violent clashes involving the use of artillery and tank guns are taking place in the areas of Sa'at al-'Abd and Hursh Thabit, and on the outskirts of Al-Ashrafiyah.

Ja'ja' on Meeting

NC1702184889 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 17 Feb 89

[News conference held by Lebanese Forces commander Samir Ja'ja' with unidentified correspondents following an expanded Christian meeting at Bkirki on 17 February—live]

[Text] [Correspondent] Dr Ja'ja' has just emerged from the meeting hall in Bkirki. Dr Ja'ja', will you brief us on the meeting?

[Ja'ja'] Where are the rest of the reporters?

[Correspondent] I only want to ask you about the atmosphere of the meeting.

[Ja'ja'] I want to speak only once.

[Correspondent] I am a reporter from the Voice of Lebanon. If you want to make a statement, the people are listening to you.

[Ja'ja'] I prefer to speak to all the reporters.

[Correspodent] Was the atmosphere of the meeting positive?

[Ja'ja'] Yes, very.

[Correspondent] Can we say that the meeting is over?

[Ja'ja'] Yes, I think so. Let us speak to all journalists. Why are you taking my answers bit by bit?

[Correspondent] Dr Ja'ja' is now walking down Bkirki steps and will speak on the atmosphere of the meeting. He is now approaching the journalists.

[Ja'ja'] I will be with you for as much as you want. Please move apart. You put your questions, and I will answer all your questions slowly and calmly. There is no need to rush and do not shove each other. Let us begin.

[Correspondent] What about the atmosphere of the meeting [words indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] As regards the atmosphere of the meeting, the issues were discussed frankly and deeply. Since the issues were discussed with frankness and in depth, the results will be frank, deep, serious, and will lead to what is required.

[Correspondent] Dr Ja'ja', there are reports about demands: Demands by the Army from you and from you by the Army. However, no one has clarified these demands in public. Can you explain these demands?

[Ja'ja'] The general has a right to ask for any demands whatever. There are no problems.

[Correspondent] What are these demands?

[Ja'ja'] A committee has been set up by the conferees in Bkirki to discuss all pending problems. If there are any demands, they will be discussed patiently and calmly, and all problems can be solved. The situation does not warrant all this.

[Correspondent] Dr Ja'ja', have you read the text of the news conference held by Prime Minister 'Awn?

[Ja'ja'] Regrettably no, I did not have time.

[Correspondent] Dr Ja'ja', can the people sleep in their homes or in shelters tonight? As regards the cease-fire, will it be consolidated or will it remain fragile?

[Ja'ja'] The people are right in whatever they say. We have been working together for 15 years so that the people in this small area of Lebanon can sleep at home. Suddenly one night, they found themselves in the midst of fighting around their homes. Anyway, what counts is not the blunder, but that it must not happen again. The problems that arose are very regrettable and totally crazy. I think that they will not recur and hope that all necessary measures will be taken so that such incidents will not recur in the eastern area.

[Correspondent] Dr Ja'Ja', it has been learned that during the meeting you submitted certain practical proposals. Can we say that these proposals will be implemented soon and reassure the people?

[Ja'ja'] Let me say this: There is nothing that warrants conflict or military confrontation in the eastern area. Whatever the price, military confrontation in the eastern area must be avoided. There must not be any confrontation in this area whatever the sacrifices, efforts, negotiations, discussion, and even concessions, and good intentions. To avoid this, I will place myself at the disposal of any reconciliatory process and negotiations just to avoid any confrontation in the eastern area. Everything can be done in order to achieve this. In the eastern area, there is no difference between the Army and the Lebanese Forces. If the Army wins, the Lebanese Forces will win, and if the Army loses, the Lebanese Forces will lose. If the Lebanese Forces lose, the Army will lose. We must realize this. From this premise, anything can be done to avoid confrontation.

[Correspondent] If the required price is the withdrawal of the Lebanese Forces from Beirut and handing over their arms or withdrawing their arms from Beirut, what would your answer be?

[Ja'ja'] Let us not go into details now. The Lebanese Forces were established to defend this country. When there is no need for the Lebanese Forces, and when a comprehensive Christian decision is made, for instance, by those who met in Bkirki today that the Lebanese Forces are not needed, there will be no need for the Lebanese Forces. We will have other things to do. But since the Lebanese Forces are needed, and as long as all the conferees and Bkirki have not deemed that the Lebanese Forces should be dissolved, they will remain to play the role for which they were established.

[Correspondent] Will there be a meeting between you and Prime Minister General 'Awn soon?

[Ja'ja'] It is possible.

[Correspondent] What is the preliminary step to paving the way for a dialogue?

[Ja'ja'] To ease the situation on the ground, and this will take place. From this moment, I am calling on all Lebanese Forces from here, and I will again officially call on them to join their barracks. From now on, there is no problem if measures are taken [by the Army] or not, in return. The Lebanese Forces will remain in their barracks. They were established for a specific goal from which we will not deviate.

[Correspondent] Dr Ja'ja', the people are in shock, they cannot comprehend how, after 4 or 5 months of talk about alliance between the Army and the Lebanese Forces, this fighting could suddenly have happened. Was the talk about alliance not accurate, or what happened?

[Ja'ja'] If you want the truth, I myself do not know what happened exactly. Everyone knows that I was outside the country. Certainly what happened is crazy. As for what happened exactly, there must be some shortcoming on several levels that led to this situation. Whatever the people complain, they are right. The situation in the past 24 hours is totally unacceptable. The incidents that took place in the eastern area are unacceptable and run counter to all our ideas. What is the free, independent, and sovereign Lebanon that we are seeking, if we cannot run our affairs in a small area with no armies of occupation? In other areas of Lebanon, there are occupation armies preventing any change. We know this state of affairs. But in our area, where we exerted great efforts to keep it safe from foreign occupation, it is unacceptable for us to fail to run our affairs.

[Correspondent] Had you not taken measures previously to prevent such a situation?

[Ja'ja'] Certainly, but this was utter madness that led to this situation.

[Correspondent] Gen 'Awn today proposed a choice between a state and a statelet within a state and urged citizens and all officials to take a stand on this issue. Is there still a possibility for formulating a relationship on a clear basis between the Lebanese Forces and the Army after all that has happened?

[Ja'ja'] I do not know if we are the mini-state that Gen 'Awn means. I do not think so, because we are not a statelet. From now on, whatever the price, we and Gen 'Awn are one hand, because we have the same political plan and face the same dangers. We must not let small incidents, possibly caused by certain low-level personnel, affect the senior echelons, our basic course, the fate of the country, and what we have been doing for over 15 years. Let us leave recriminations to the juniors. We must act to calm down the situation and put the incidents in their proper perspective. I want to repeat, whatever the cause, there is nothing to warrant or deserve the devastation or military confrontation that occurred in East Beirut. Whatever the cause, military confrontation in East Beirut is forbidden.

[Correspondent] In other words, there was no political background to what happened. Everything was due to reciprocal excesses.

[Ja'ja'] I think so.

[Correspondent] Gen 'Awn spoke today about the taxes that the Lebanese Forces are collecting. The people are complaining about these taxes, and so is Gen 'Awn. What is your explanation for this?

[Ja'ja'] Gen 'Awn is a brilliant politician. He knows how to talk about issues that he knows are sensitive to the people. But this was not the proper time to raise the issue, because I do not think that this was what led to the recent clashes. If it was the issue of taxes, then why was this issue not raised before? Gen 'Awn and myself used to meet daily and talk about so many things, and we never discussed taxes before. If the issue is that of taxes, we will not collect taxes. We do not want all these taxes. We have military and security expenses. We also have public transportation and social welfare expenses. If the cabinet provides these expenses, we are ready to immediately suspend all taxes. But if the cabinet is not ready to provide them—and there are 20,000 families in the Lebanese Forces and social welfare, public transportation, and other social plans that we cannot suspend [sentence as heard]. We will not stick to the issue of taxes. We do not like them. They exist out of necessity.

[Correspondent] Dr Ja'ja', do you think that linking the issue of the clashes and the reasons for them with the issue of Greater Beirut or Administrative Beirut is due to serious discussion taking place abroad, particularly in the quarters that have recently shown great interest in Lebanon's crisis?

[Ja'ja'] If the issue is that of Administrative Beirut, it does not need all this. We have stated more than once that if there is a serious plan for an Administrative Beirut, which will be under the control of the Lebanese Army only, we will be the first to proceed with it. If the issue is that of Administrative Beirut, it does not need all this. We could have sat down and discussed the issue. If there is readiness from both sides to establish Administrative Beirut, with its eastern and western sectors and under the authority of the legitimate Lebanese Army, we have no objection.

[Correspondent] Is it true that through what happened in the past 2 days the Lebanese Forces wanted to seize power or carry out a coup against the legitimate authority?

[Ja'ja'] It is strange how wild the imaginations of some people are sometimes. I do not understand what prompted some people to come up with this idea. Were the Lebanese Forces trying to seize power? Let us see who attacked and who was attacked, and whose positions were occupied. This theory is absolutely untrue. We were the first to recognize the authority, and particularly the present one. Even when everyone stops recognizing it, we will continue to defend it. We have no reason to try to carry out a coup or to confront a legitimate authority that we see as the embodiment of our political views and our future ambitions and plans.

[Correspondent] Gen 'Awn held you responsible for starting the 'Uyun al-Siman incident, and then the Al-Judaydah and Al-Mansuriyah incidents, and then the Monte Verde ambush. Do the Lebanese Forces admit that they started these incidents?

[Ja'ja'] The Lebanese Forces definitely did not start these incidents, and Gen 'Awn definitely does not know what is happening on the ground. The facts will become clear, and when they do Gen 'Awn himself will appreciate them in a different manner and will act differently.

[Correspondent] What about the story about the attack on his house and his family?

[Ja'ja'] It is not true.

[Correspondent] [Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] This is not true at all. I do not want to go back in history. But, at the time, there were reasons that we all are aware of. Some of them were local and some regional, which led to the events in the north and to the Ihdin operation. It is not only that all these factors do not exist today, but there are counter-factors that produce greater unity and understanding between Gen 'Awn and ourselves. There is no reason that calls or makes us think at any time to attack Gen 'Awn. This is out of the question.

[Correspondent] What was the reason for Gen 'Awn's failure to attend today's meeting?

[Ja'ja'] I do not know. You must ask Gen 'Awn himself.

[Correspondent] You told us that you were traveling. Could you tell us where you were? Were you in Kuwait, for example?

[Ja'ja'] In China. [background laughter]

[Correspondent] [Words indistinct] the two parties. What is your comment about this?

[Ja'ja'] In some of the incidents that took place, this was very true. Yesterday we felt that when it was quiet in one place, fire was opened on an Army position or a Lebanese Forces position, and then we found out later that neither the Lebanese Forces nor the Army opened fire. Unfortunately, we still do not have tangible proof of third-party involvement.

[Correspondent] Finally, what can you tell the citizens?

[Ja'ja'] Perhaps the others want to say something. Young men, who has a question to ask?

[Correspondent] On 23 September, you regarded the military government as the government of independence. Do you still maintain this opinion?

[Ja'ja'] Without doubt. These basic considerations are not lost by secondary details. This government is definitely a government of independence. We may agree or disagree with it. But this does not negate the fact that this is a government of independence.

[Correspondent] Dr Ja'ja', we want a few words in English, if you please.

[Ja'ja'] Let us know how to understand each other in Arabic. [background laughter]

[Correspondent] If there is agreement today, how do you view your relations with the government tomorrow and the day after?

[Ja'ja'] I view it with optimism. We will make all necessary efforts to reach an understanding on all the matters, irrespective of how numerous are the points of differences, we must sit and discuss them. These differences do not exist between a Lebanese and a Syrian party, for example, or between two foreign parties, or between a patriotic and a nonpatriotic party. No. This disagreement exists among members of the same party. For this reason, we should not calculate who concedes to who, who gives to who, and who gets out of the way of who. What is important is that we should not return to conflict in the eastern area. Good night, brothers.

[Correspondent, in English] What can you say about the situation now between the Army and the Lebanese Forces?

[Ja'ja', in English] The situation is getting better. I hope in the coming few days the situation would be completely normalized.

[Correspondent, in English] Can you tell us what are the causes of the events that had happened lately in East Beirut?

[Ja'ja', in English] There were many causes, but most of them are small, really, small, tactical, practical causes.

[Correspondent, in English] Do you see that the Lebanese Forces has to pay a certain price to reach into a certain settlement?

[Ja'ja', in English] Not necessarily, but we are ready to pay any price in order to save the eastern areas of Lebanon, the free areas of Lebanon.

[Correspondent, in English] Would you be meeting soon with Gen 'Awn?

[Ja'ja', in English] Maybe.

Statement Issued on Meeting

NC1702191389 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1740 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Statement issued at the conclusion of a meeting of leading Christian figures under the chairmanship of Maronite Patriarch Sfayr at Bkirki in East Beirut on 17 February; read by Bishop Bisharah al-Ra'i—live or recorded]

[Text] In response to an invitation by His Beatitude Patriarch Mar Nasrallah Butrus Sfayr, a meeting was held in Bkirki this afternoon that was attended by 25 deputies from the Christian sects, Lebanese Front representatives, and the Lebanese Forces' commander. The conferees reviewed the situation resulting from the bloody security incidents in the eastern areas, as well as the grave human and material losses caused by these incidents. During the meeting, contacts were made with General Michel 'Awn, the prime minister and army commander. Following their discussions, the conferees declared their agreement on the following:

1. The denunciation of violence and fighting and resorting to weapons at a time when Lebanon most needs a unity of ranks;

2. The consolidation of a permanent cease-fire and a halt to media campaigns and exchanges of accusations;

3. The withdrawal of Lebanese Forces' gunmen and a return to their barracks;

4. The extension of the rule of law to all Lebanese territory;

5. The commitment to providing a suitable climate for restructuring the legitimate and unified state and its constitutional institutions, beginning with the election of a president of the republic who will embody the unity of the homeland and the people;

6. The establishment of a followup and liaison committee to resolve all the outstanding problems, consisting of the following deputies: Nasri al-Ma'luf, Khatchig Babikian, Michel Sasin, George Sa'adah, Jubran Tawq, and Tariq Habshi; and

7. The resumption of the meeting at the patriarchate seat at 1430 tomorrow, Saturday, to discuss the developments.

'Awn Agreement Denied

NC1702204989 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 2000 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] General 'Awn's sources have denied that 'Awn agreed on the Bkirki statement, saying that 'Awn made no comment on the statement, either positively or negatively. The sources added that 'Awn was contacted from Bkirki and mere views were exchanged. The sources said that Gen 'Awn will not meet with the follow-up committee tonight and stressed that neither the halting of the media campaigns nor the cease-fire agreement, which was violated this afternoon, will be complied with.

'Awn Comments on Meeting

NC1802080889 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] In an initial reaction to the meeting in Bkirki and the resolutions adopted by the conferees, General Michel 'Awn stated last night: We are open to peaceful solutions because we only seek by our endeavors the restoration of sovereignty and the legitimate authority in the interest of the state, and not the shedding of blood.

He added: They have asked us to receive the committee. We agreed after they informed us of their support for the supremacy of law and the legitimate authority's control. I believe that there should either be a swift implementation of our peaceful proposals within a specific period, or there will be a quicker resolution. We hope that we will achieve a swift peace. I will see what the committee will present to me. We shall not fall in the labyrinths of committees, and we shall not allow anybody to prolong the present situation. We shall act and exert efforts to ensure the implementation of our proposals. If our proposals are to be implemented gradually, this should take place within a specific period.

Sfayr Contacts 'Awn, Ja'ja'

NC1902074889 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] The Maronite Patriarchate secretariat has issued a statement that Patriarch Nasrallah Butrus Sfayr will participate in the Arab Committee meetings in Kuwait out of his conviction that the Arab League is serious in its efforts to find the desired solution to restore normal conditions in Lebanon. Patriarch Sfayr will participate in the meetings so that it may not be said that we were given an opportunity to find a solution, but we did not wish to take it.

Meanwhile, the parliamentary committee met with General Michel 'Awn and Lebanese Forces commander Samir Ja'ja' yesterday. Gen 'Awn emphasized to the committee his professed stand and reiterated that a clear-cut stand should be adopted. He said that he alone is responsible, and his stand is clear on all subjects. Gen 'Awn reasserted that there are only two options: Either his peace proposals will be swiftly implemented within a specific period, or there will be a quick resolution.

The deputies and leaders who participated in the Christian meeting in Bkirki have asked Patriarch Sfayr to approach Gen 'Awn and Dr Ja'ja' to tell them that he is going to Kuwait and to ask them not to cause any problems during his absence. Patriarch Sfayr contacted Gen 'Awn and Dr Ja'ja' yesterday. Gen 'Awn and Dr Ja'ja' wished him success in his task.

It has been learned that Gen 'Awn and Dr Ja'ja' emphasized to the parliamentary committee that no military action will be taken in the future.

Cease-Fire 'Marred'

NC1902124489 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] The fragile cease-fire in the eastern area is being marred by sporadic violations. The Army and the Lebanese Forces have engaged in reciprocal kidnapping operations. The propaganda campaign between the two sides has continued through mobilization campaigns and the organization of demonstrations and counter-demonstrations. This occurs at a time when the joint committee failed to secure the release of approximately 45 kidnapped persons held by the two sides.

Meanwhile, detention, alert, and ammunition stockpiling operations have intensified on all combat lines as well as on all the new contact lines, despite what has been reiterated about real disengagements.

Sources close to those who participated in the second meeting held by Bkirki yesterday stated that the meeting did not achieve any real progress, and that the prevailing tendency is to maintain the calm, pending Patriarch Sfayr's return from the Arab committee meetings in Kuwait. The six-member parliamentary committee will, meanwhile, continue to hold discussions with the two parties on their differences.

Sources of the committee noted that General 'Awn presented five interlinked demands:

1. That all the Lebanese Forces' barracks and centers in the area extending from Nahr al-Kalb to Beirut be closed. This means the implementation of the greater Beirut plan.

2. That Beirut be only a political center for the Lebanese Forces.

3. That the illegal ports be handed over to the legitimate authority.

4. That the collection of all forms of fees be stopped.

5. That the national fund be handed over to a Christian body under the supervision of Bkirki [the seat of Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Sfayr] to distribute money to the homeless and needy.

Conversely, according to the committee sources, Lebanese Forces Commander Samir Ja'Ja' proposes that the Army take over all of Beirut in both its sectors. It is only then that he will withdraw his forces from the capital and hand over the ports to the state. He also proposes that a joint financial committee be established to secure funds to the Army and the Lebanese Forces as a compromise solution to the Lebanese Forces issue.

'Awn Urges Expelling LF

NC1902161989 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1530 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] According to security reports, a state of tension, anxiety, fear, and anticipation prevails in the eastern areas as a result of the numerous violations of the fragile cease-fire agreement. The same reports add that the Army and the Lebanese Forces are trading accusations over the storming operations, detentions, and shows of force.

Some security sources have said that the Lebanese Forces have stormed the residences of Army personnel and have reinforced their positions in several areas. According to these same sources, the Lebanese Forces have brought fresh troops and armored cars to Al-Ashrafiyah, Al-Karantinah, and Al-Dawrah.

Meanwhile, General 'Awn insists on expelling the Lebanese Forces from East Beirut, curbing unofficial levies, and restoring sovereignty. Such steps increase the likelihood of a new flareup.

The Army and the Lebanese Forces today traded accusations over violations of the truce worked out under the auspices of Patriarch Sfayr. AFP cited a military source as saying that the Lebanese Forces are bringing reinforcements and that its personnel are still deployed in areas that should have been vacated in accordance with the Bkirki-brokered agreement. A Lebanese Forces' spokesman denied the accusation, saying that these inflamatory claims are aimed at escalating the situation. The spokesman accused the Army of arresting Lebanese Forces' members. However, an Army source has denied these accusations, adding that the Army is only arresting suspects, particularly drug traffickeers and fugitives.

AFP reports that last week's fighting has left 77 people dead—14 Army personnel, 28 Lebanese Forces members, and 35 citizens—and well over 200 others injured. Reports indicate that the Lebanese Forces are holding 100 soldiers whereas the Army is detaining some 300 Lebanese Forces personnel.

Army Warns Lebanese Forces

NC1902171989 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Excerpt] The radio station [not further identified] under the supervision of General 'Awn reports in its 1800 news bulletin that a roadblock set up by gunmen near Nahr al-Kalb is preventing people from heading toward Beirut. These gunmen confiscated the fuel oil from the gas stations in Al-Judaydah and Al-Dawrah and brought reinforcements to Furn al-Shubbak and Al-Sayfi.

The Army Command in Al-Yarzah has accused the Lebanese Forces of threatening the families of Army personnel in the areas under their control. The command issued a statement warning the Lebanese Forces to stop such practices or else receive the appropriate punishment regardless of whether the solution is peaceful or otherwise. [passage omitted]

Ja'ja' Holds News Conference

NC1902205589 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1917 GMT 19 Feb 89

[News conference held by Lebanese Forces commander Samir Ja'ja' at the Lebanese Forces Council of War in Beirut—live]

[Text] [Ja'ja'] I might have tortured you by keeping you with me tonight. I preferred to stay awake with you in the hope that the citizens would enjoy a good night's sleep. There have undoubtedly been some practical causes for the recent events. These causes were not tackled in the necessary way. As we have already said today, all parties have displayed shortcomings on various levels. These shortcomings led to the clashes. In the meantime, these clashes caused tension to be misplaced and wrong impressions to be created. They clouded the overall picture. The events caused confusion over matters which we consider to be very basic.

Although it is late at night, I consider it important to remind you of our stands on these basic issues so as to avoid any confusion. We consider the government of General 'Awn to be the legitimate Lebanese Government. From the very first moment, we have regarded that government as a government of independence. This is the government for which we have waited for 15 years. I believe that had such a government or this government specifically been formed at the time the events began [in 1975] or during any of their stages, a solution in Lebanon would have been greatly speeded up. It is our belief that this government is the right approach to the solution. Many others may consider this government to be an obstacle in the way of the solution. We, however, still consider and will continue to consider this government to be the right approach to any real and serious solution in Lebanon. The reason is that for the first time in 15, if not in 40 years, a government exists which completely embodies the ambitions, aspirations, and hopes of the Lebanese people for a free state and a free, sovereign, and independent homeland.

From this premise, it is the duty of this government to adopt the measures necessary for the country's interests in the various political, military, economic, or social fields. I want no confusion about our stand on and our view of this government and its role. Many ill-willed persons have tried to carry out suspect roles, which have painted an unclear picture of our position and stand on the government. This is our basic, fundamental, and original stand on the government.

The second point which I would like to make is that I place the Lebanese Forces at the disposal of this government. I place the military wing of the Lebanese Forces at the disposal of the Lebanese Army so that we will together work to liberate Lebanon from the Syrians. We regrettably and suddenly all forgot our duty. We forgot the major issue which we had been handling. We forgot the big problems facing us. We forgot the many enemies confronting us. We ended up dicussing petty and trivial issues rather than the major ones.

All of us must work side by side to cement our efforts in order to carry on. We must marshal all our necessary potentials for the biggest issue; namely, to liberate Lebanon from all the foreign forces on its soil, particularly the Syrian Army, which currently represents the basic factor of occupation.

From this premise, I believe that the confusion which prevailed has disappeared and the unclear picture which prevailed no longer exists. I believe that life has returned to normal in the free areas at this time. As for my comrades in the Lebanese Forces, I call on them to return to their normal life. I tell them that the personnel of the Lebanese Army are their comrades-in-struggle now more than ever before. The personnel of the Lebanese Army are now resistance fighters like you if perhaps not more than you for the sake of the major cause, particularly after General 'Awn assumed the command of the Army and then the premiership. I want all of you to cement your efforts together so that we can achieve our objectives, foremost of which is the liberation of the country and the establishment of a true state, which we have long aspired to. Certainly love, courage—and love needs courage much more than enmity—solid work, painstaking efforts, daily work, and coordination with others would enable us to achieve all of our objectives.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] From now on, any details or unresolved problems will be handled by committees working methodically and away from publicity.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] There is an initiative and several contacts were made with the government.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] Never. On the contrary, the Lebanese Forces are brothers. Make no mistake about that. The Lebanese Forces are here to stay. The Lebanese Forces will remain with us as long as a single foreign soldier remains on Lebanese soil and as long as the legitimate power of the state is not well-established over all the Lebanese territories within Lebanon's international borders. The Lebanese Forces are here to stay. On many occasions the Lebanese Forces have supported the state power and prevented it from collapsing. The presence and continued existence of the Lebanese Forces is not in question in any way. Contrary to what some people say, General 'Awn never brought up this point in the first place.

I now would like to draw your attention to one point: During the events, emotions tended to run high. This always happens during clashes. When bullets begin to fly, sentiments and emotions overwhelm realism and sobriety. Therefore, we should not take everything we heard in the past few days over the news media at face value.

It is possible that some among us became overly excited and adopted stands or spoke in an unacceptable manner. It also is possible that some others worked themselves up and assumed unrealistic and improper positions. These are not the true positions, which are those we always have assumed in the past. General 'Awn cooperated with the Lebanese Forces in 1977 and 1982. We held meetings with him. I particularly recall the meeting we held in Dar al-Qattarah.

Therefore, our positions should not be distorted. The stands taken during the events should not be taken out of context. It is human nature for people to get worked up. This is not the true position. The true position is what you know. General 'Awn is the same man we have always known and not the person whom the media portrayed over the past 3 or 4 days.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] There has been unjust criticism against the Lebanese Forces over the past 4 or 5 days. I did not want to respond to any of the accusations made against the Lebanese Forces, because I had one task in mind. For the past 4 or 5 days, I could not care less about the accusations being levelled or how I should respond. My single preoccupation was how the situation could be defused and how a normal life could be restored in the liberated areas. I will hold a special news conference in 3 or 4 days to refute all the criticism. When the situation is completely calm and all the tension, military and nonmilitary, is dissipated, I will begin to respond to the charges and disclose the facts to all the citizens.

The Lebanese Forces have been villified but I prefered not to respond, for the country's sake, for the past few days. We will have time for that later. What mattered was that the tension should be defused. When everyone is again at ease, we will be able to sit calmly and state the facts as they are. I believe that the public will understand.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] I ask the citizens not to get confused. All efforts are being exerted in one direction—the direction of tranquility. I believe that this night is decisive as a result of a series of exchanges that seek to establish calm in a basic and definite manner. There is no room for confusion because calm will prevail in the end. Certainly, at this moment the citizens will observe that the situation has returned to complete normalcy.

As I said, there is now a chance to sit calmly to discuss all the practical problems and to find solutions to these. There is nothing on the ground that cannot be solved. Everything becomes difficult to solve only when the tanks and artillery begin firing. As long as there is no military tension on the ground, everything can be solved.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'Ja'] There was no political dimension with regard to all of the events and moves that had taken place. Small events preceded all of this, but those were tackled with emotionalism. These small events became bigger, at which time some people tried to achieve political gains. However, no political gains were achieved. The present government is our government. We will work together hand in hand to achieve our objectives. Any other explanation is false, unrealistic, and to no avail.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] There were a lot of distortions recently, particularly from some of the remnants of the past. But all my impressions and information indicate that the present government is shouldering its responsibilities to the best of its ability and wants to cooperate with all the key political, military, economic, and social figures in free Lebanon so that it would be able to achieve its objectives. This government or any other government [in the free areas] represents the people. Therefore, it is false to say that the government does not want to cooperate with the people which it represents. Thus, we must not be deceived by such distortions.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] That is at the disposal of the government and the Lebanese Army. This has several meanings. It means, for example, that it will be natural to assume that there will be a unified military move with regard to anything that is raised in the interests of the country at the military level. This is a foregone conclusion. What I want to say is that this already existed, although in a preliminary way. The events took place at the same time. The principle existed and it was agreed upon.

At the beginning of this year, approximately 1 and ½ months ago, we and Army officers raised in a serious manner the issue of how to begin the process of merging the Forces and the Army. In other words, the implementation of the political plan between us and the current government was in full swing at that time. Regrettably, conditions surface at such times to obstruct a specific process. At this stage, a group of internal, local, personal, regional, international, and psychological conditions surfaced that permitted the events to erupt. However, the position I am explaining now does not really differ at all from our constant and firm position regarding this government. Within this framework, I say that our position with regard to any other possible government would not have been the same as the position we assumed with regard to this government since it emerged from the Presidential Palace for the first time. This has been my stand and I will continue to support it regardless of the developments and their direction.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] If you are concerned about the situation between me and the government, I will reassure everyone and tell them not to worry. As for the problems which have arisen and those which have not, we will sit quietly in a room over a cup of coffee and solve them in the right way. Some might ask why this has not happened earlier. The truth is that it happened and that progress was made and steps were taken. However, as I have already said, none of us can control history and turn back the clock, or control time, or the course of events. Regrettably, things accumulated and there were emotional and unbalanced reactions in the past 15 days which led to the events. This does not mean that we should become bogged down if a problem emerges. What is important is that we consider what we can do to overcome this problem. I believe that we have overcome the problem in view of what has happened now. Even more important for us is that we consider what we should do to prevent us from being confronted with another similar problem. This is not at present a challenge to us as officials and to the government and everyone else; rather, this is our primary duty in the forthcoming stage.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] There will be no changes in the political policy whether at the level of the eastern areas or in general. As far as the free areas are concerned, we are one bloc and one group in support of the legitimate government under

General 'Awn in order to achieve our objectives; namely, to drive out the Syrians and all other foreign forces from Lebanon and to establish a true state in Lebanon. This is regarding the eastern areas.

As for the Syrians and their allies, our ideas are still the same and our political plan is still the same. We are forging ahead with our plan. On this occasion, I would like to tell everyone how we suddenly forget our duty and why the Army, Lebanese Forces, and this government were established. I also would like to discuss how we suddenly forget all of our political ideas and all of our objectives and aspirations, and began to preoccupy ourselves with small things, some of which were problems. However, we must tackle problems starting with the big and most pressing ones. A person should try to solve his 50 complicated problems and not look into trivial ones.

From this premise, we must continue to remember our political plan, objectives, our enemies who are lying in wait for us, what foreign intervention is doing to us, what the occupations are doing to us, the attempt to disintegrate Lebanon, the attempt to dispense with Lebanon, and the attempt to wipe Lebanon off the map. We must see how we should solve all these problems as all other problems can be solved easily.

[Question Indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] Sometimes I do not know how to respond to this because it is too complicated. However, I would like to say publicly that I did not expect Gen 'Awn to visit Tunis and to present his proposal with such courage, clarity, and frankness. When Gen 'Awn presented his proposal in Tunis and achieved his success, all of this was for our sake as well. Gen 'Awn's proposal is our proposal. The best time for a man is to see his political plan and proposal forging ahead. Gen 'Awn is embodying our political plan. Therefore, we have no reason to be unhappy about Gen 'Awn's success and proposals in Tunis. If I could achieve 50 successes like the success that Gen 'Awn achieved in Tunis, I would not hesitate for one moment to do so. I consider this success a success for all of us and this progress as progress for all of us, not as the Lebanese Forces, but as free Lebanese. Therefore, I reject what you say in part and parcel. If Gen 'Awn achieves a victory like the one achieved in Tunis, our rights will be saved. I myself will have my right attained and I need nothing in this life except to see our cause triumph in this way.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] The Lebanese Forces were formed to exist in all areas, quarters, villages and houses. The Lebanese Forces are not a mere number of members who are in some barracks, or on some fronts, or who are carrying out specific duties. We consider the Lebanese Forces as constituting every free citizen in the eastern areas and elsewhere. They will continue to defend this cause and carry out the duty because our other Lebanese brothers do not have the potential to confront the occupation armies which are crouching in their midst. These are the Lebanese Forces. If we speak about the evacuation of the Lebanese Forces from Kasrawan, Jubal, or Beirut, this means to us the evacuation of all the inhabitants in these areas. This is unacceptable, unreasonable, illogical, and out of the question. Moreover, this issue has not been raised.

[Ja'ja'] We will immediately implement any serious plan for greater Beirut, both its eastern and western parts, which provides for 'Awn and his government's assumption of its affairs. We will implement it without any question or discussion. I repeat: When a serious plan is put forward to achieve greater Beirut without the Syrian Army or any other armed group and under the control of Gen 'Awn we will immediately implement it without any conditions, discussions, preliminaries, background, or anything else. We will implement the greater Beirut plan immediately.

As for the levies, I do not wish to enter into details tonight. As I have said previously, I do not want nor am I happy about these levies. If a legitimate or illegitimate authority is found in the free areas which could secure for me the expenses of the soldiers and the forces, as well as the expenses of social security, transportation, health insurance, and educational security, then I will immediately do without all these levies. If we were to stop these levies now, how would we provide medicines? How we would feed the soldier? Do we tell this soldier: Take a pinch of the soil near you and eat. However, I prefer to defer a discussion of this issue and its details until a later time.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] These are some of the issues to be raised and discussed. However, I do not believe there will be any disagreement over any of them. It is our opinion that if the Lebanese Army takes over East Beirut without a parallel plan for West Beirut, then a demand will be made 2 or 3 months later that the Army leave East Beirut and that a force, I do not know which, assume its control. The Syrian Army might leave these areas.

Let us remain alert if only at the level of political tactics. They say now: Let us implement the greater Beirut plan. What does greater Beirut mean? It means that the Syrians and the militia groups there should leave and the Lebanese Forces should withdraw from East Beirut and that the legitimate Army should take over. This is a sound idea. However, let us suppose that the Lebanese Forces agree to the idea of greater Beirut, and that the Army alone will remain there. What will happen is that the Syrians and their agents will start saying that this a factional army of Al-Yarzah and a [word indistinct] army. They also will say: We must expel this army from Beirut and implement the greater Beirut plan ourselves. Who will implement this plan? There (?are as many choices) as you can imagine. It could be the Al-Khatib army which will implement the greater Beirut plan. Everybody should know that we need each other at this particular period. You know what I mean.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] I have heard that the schools will reopen on Tuesday.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] Naturally, I held this news conference and kept you so late for this reason. This is definite.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] Everything will be solved. Certainly everything will be dealt with, including the detainees, arrests, and other issues. What counts is that we should agree at the political level.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] Everything necessary has been implemented to pacify the situation. I do not need to go into details. You only are interested in the results.

[Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] The situation is good.

On this occasion, I would like to express my regret to the citizens for the events that have taken place in the free areas. The events benefitted nobody. It is now important for us to work to avoid a recurrence of such events. I believe that intentions are good and that with the cooperation of everyone we can achieve our aspired goal and liberate our country. I wish you and every citizen pleasant dreams tonight. May God preserve you.

PSP's Junblatt Rejects 'Wagering on 'Awn'

NC1902164189 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] PSP leader Walid Junblatt has reiterated his belief that political reform is the basis for reconciliation. Junblatt has described the current situation in East Beirut as one of wolves eating each other. He made these remarks while receiving a large number of popular delegations which flocked to Al-Mukhtarah to offer condolences on the death of martyrs Anwar al-Fatayri and Muhammad Sa'id Abu Mahdi.

Junblatt said: Some people in this country are wagering on Michel 'Awn by holding the meetings in Tunis and Kuwait. These people should understand that as nationalist forces we wager on political reforms as the basis for reconciliation. We believe that a nationalist army, which would have pan-Arab commitments and which would defend Lebanon and the South, should be built. Such an army should coordinate with the Arab Syrian Army on matters of strategy, security, and war.

Junblatt added: We need not recall Michel 'Awn's feats in the southern suburb and the mountain. Perhaps there is some divergence today between the U.S. and Israeli designs, but this is not our concern. What is happening in East Beirut is simply that wolves are eating each other.

Junblatt said: Our options are those of political reforms and of true Arabization of all the Lebanese institutions, particularly the Army. We cannot place our trust in groups of mercenaries who would, if they assured power, terminate political life and challenge our pan-Arab commitments and alliance with Syria.

Junblatt said: This is my warning. This is what I want certain people in West Beirut to heed. Among those is his excellency the prime minister, whose political sentiments are well known. This also goes for others who have not yet spoken in public, but whose sentiments we already know.

As for the Arabs in Tunis, Junblatt said, they can, if they wish, hold consultations with whomever they want and wherever they choose. They may, if they wish, hold talks in Tunis, in Kuwait, in Bahrain, and even in Qatar and Oman. We tell the Arabs: We are firm in our choices. We have chosen political reforms, pan-Arab commitments, political participation, and the formation of a pan-Arab army; that is, the restructuring of the army.

Lebanese Hizballah Ready To Execute Rushdie

LD1902192189 Tehran IRNA in English 1810 GMT 1 Feb 89

[Text] Beirut, Feb. 18, IRNA—The Hizballah in Lebanon has hailed Imam Khomeyni's decreeing of death penalty for Salman Rushdie and publishers of the 'The Satanic Verses' as "a just decree."

"Global arrogance was behind a variety of plots to stain Islam's face," said a Hizballah statement released today, and promised a tooth-smashing answer to all such imperialist-Zionist conspiracies. "The apostate will be executed," it said and noted that God's last revelation to mankind, Islam, has continued to enlighten the world despite attempts to tarnish its glowing image.

"The Muslims will continue their resistance," it concluded.

Last Tuesday, the leader of the Islamic Revolution, pronounced death sentence for Rushdie and all those involved in the publication of the Satanic work if aware of its contents. In Islam the punishment for apostasy is death, and all five schools of jurisprudence are unanimous on this principle with slight variances "if the prophet (S.A.W.) or the divine book is insulted."

The whole drama has unmasked friends and foes of Islam, and though leading world Islamic personalities both Shi'ite and Sunni have endorsed Imam Khomeyni's statement, it is point of regret that some Muslim governments for whom it was a golden opportunity to express Islamic solidarity have largely kept mum. Rushdie who has gone underground, today reportedly felt sorry for the uproar worldwide which has claimed lives in Pakistan and India.

Reportage on Visit of Soviet Foreign Minister

Arrives, Makes Statement

JN1702172989 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Damascus—Eduard Shevardnadze, member of the CPSU Central Committee's Politburo and USSR foreign minister, arrived in Damascus this afternoon at 1600 on a visit to Syria. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Assistant Foreign Minister Diya'ullah al-Fattal, Syrian Ambassador in Moscow 'Isam al-Na'ib, and the heads of the Departments of Eastern Europe and Protocol in the Foreign Ministry. He was also received by Soviet ambassador in Damascus and heads of socialist countries' diplomatic missions in Damascus.

Mr Shevardnadze made a statement to reporters upon arrival. He said: The old Arab proverb comes to my mind: all roads lead to Damascus. Through the roads of bilateral cooperation, we reached this wonderful country. This year is a special year for our two countries in which we celebrate the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between us. During these years, we have gained rich and great experiences in fruitful cooperation in all fields.

Shevardnadze affirmed that cooperation between the Soviet Union and Syria is based on a firm, solid foundation of bilateral friendship. The presence of this foundation allows us to look into the depths of the future through past experiences and future prospects of cooperation. He indicated that he is carrying a personal message from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to President Hafiz al-Asad. He continued: We will discuss issues dealing with bilateral cooperation, but the central issue of discussion will be the situation in the Middle East and the whole world and ways of finding solutions to other regional issues.

Shevardnadze added: We will discuss, in particular, the issue of a settlement in the Middle East proceeding from our belief that Syria is a key country in this and other regional issues. In answer to a question, the Soviet foreign minister said: The Soviet Union has been and remains concerned about the situation in the Middle East. The new political thinking allows for self-criticism. Therefore, I wish to stress the necessity of reviving Soviet efforts in Middle East affairs. I believe that circumstances are currently more appropriate for finding solutions to the Middle East cause than previously, despite the fact that this issue is very complicated and needs deep discussion.

In answer to another question on relations between the Soviet Union and Syria, he said: The foundation of Syrian-Soviet relations is solid and firm. These relations will develop horizontally and vertically. Our relations are founded on equality and mutual respect. In answer to a question on whether he is carrying new ideas on solving the Middle East problem, he said: There are some new ideas, but it is not necessary for me to reveal them now. There are new ideas and proposals. What is important is to hear the opinions of the various sides on these ideas and benefit from all available opportunities to find a solution to the Middle East conflict. These opportunities are increasing.

In answer to the reporters' questions on Shevardnadze's visit to Damascus, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' said: I welcome Mr Shevardnadze in our country. I agree with all he has said on relations between Syria and the Soviet Union. These relations, which are based on friendship and cooperation and have existed for more than 4 centuries, have developed in a clear manner since the corrective movement of 1970 led by President Hafiz al-Asad. In 1980, these relations were crowned by the signing of the treaty of friendship and cooperation between Syria and the Soviet Union. Shevardnadze is accompanied by a large official Soviet delegation.

Attends Foreign Ministry Talks

JN1702195089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1915 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Damascus—A round of talks was held this evening at the Foreign Ministry between the Syrian side, headed by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and the Soviet side, headed by Eduard Shevardnadze, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburu and USSR foreign minister.

The talks were attended on the Syrian side by Yusuf Shakkur and Diya'ullah al-Fattal, assistant foreign ministers; 'Isam al-Na'ib, Syrian ambassador in Moscow; Dr Jabr al-Kafri, head of Eastern Europe Desk at the Foreign Ministry; and Dr Walid al-Mu'allim, head of the Special Offices Desk at the Foreign Ministry.

On the Soviet side, the talks were attended by Aleksandr Zotov, USSR ambassador in Damascus; Vladimir Polyakov, chief of Near Eastern and North African Countries Administration at the USSR Foreign Ministry; Teymuraz Stepanov, assistant to the foreign minister; (Valeriy Chorkin), adviser to the foreign minister; Gennadiy Tarasov, deputy chief of Near Eastern and Northen African Countries Administration; (Aleksandr Zasikin), acting head of a section at the Near Eastern and Northen African Countries Administration; (Aleksandr Saltanaov), head of a section at the Near Eastern and Northern African Countries Administration; and Aleksey Chistyakov, head of a section at the Near Eastern and Northen African Countries Administration. [last five titles as heard]

Damascus TV on Talks

JN1702212289 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Excerpts] A round of talks was held this evening at the Foreign Ministry between the Syrian side, headed by

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and the Soviet side, headed by Eduard Shevardnadze, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburu and USSR foreign minister. [passage omitted]

The talks concentrated on relations of friendship and cooperation that exist between Syria and the USSR and means to develop them in all fields.

Also, a review was made of the international situation, the situation in the Middle East region, and prospects of convening the international conference for peace under UN auspices.

Delivers Letter to Al-Asad

JN1802190889 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1130 today USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and his delegation. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Syria's ambassador in Moscow, and the USSR Ambassador in Damascus. Shevardnadze gave his excellency the president a letter from USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev on matters of bilateral interest and international developments. He also conveyed to his excellency greetings and good wishes of the USSR president and leadership. The president gave him a reply letter to President Gorbachev and asked him to convey to him and the Soviet leadership and peoples his greetings and good wishes.

They discussed international developments, the Middle East, and bilateral ties. They also discussed the prospects of a just, comprehensive Mideast settlement and a UN-sponsored international conference. Shevardnadze stressed the need to develop and foster cooperation and friendship between Syria and the USSR in all spheres and to continue their consultations on matters of shared interest. He voiced the USSR's appreciation for Syria's posture in the Near and Middle East and its defense of their peoples' rights. Shevardnadze noted Syria's Arab and international stature and declared that the USSR leadership holds in high regard the struggle of Syrian leaders to promote regional peace and stability.

His excellency the president emphasized the need to further bilateral relations in all domains, expressing his appreciation for the USSR's efforts on behalf of regional and world peace and international detente and security. He also expressed Syria's interest in working for permament and just peace in the region and convening the UN-sponsored international conference with the participation of all the parties concerned including the PLO.

Visits Vice President

JN1802191889 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam received at 1900 today USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Sheverdnadze and his delegation. They discussed world developments and regional issues with an accent on the Middle East and the proposed UN-sponsored international conference.

Exchanges Speeches With Al-Shar'

JN1902072489 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' hosted a dinner banquet last night in honor of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and his delegation.

Al-Shar' delivered a speech on this occasion and said: Syrian-USSR relations, which our country has known since the dawn of independence, have made remarkable progress in various spheres since the inception of the glorious Corrective Movement led by struggler comrade Hafiz al-Asad.

Al-Shar' added: The cause of world and regional peace has always been a major topic in Syrian-USSR talks. Al-Shar' affirmed that peace must be the option of all and added: Based on this, Syria calls for the convening of an international Middle East peace conference which must result in the Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and in securing the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian Arab people.

The foreign minister asserted that Israel's rejection of the convening of the international conference is added evidence of its rejection of peace and of its constant attempt to evade international legitimacy and UN resolutions.

Shevardnadze then delivered a speech in which he said: Syria is an important and solid link in the Arab world. Besides, it is a country of good repute and influence in the Middle East. Its voice is listened to with care and its opinion is taken into account.

The USSR foreign minister added: War and aggression deprive people of many things. The past represented by the debris of Al-Qunaytirah which has so far continued to accompany us with its bitter memories and its sharp agonies will not prevent us from preoccupying ourselves with the future; namely, taking an interest in peace. Shevardnadze continued: We firmly believe that the suitable components for the convocation of an international conference to be attended by all parties concerned have ripened at present. This is the realistic and safe mechanism to ensure settling the conflict and resolving the pivotal issue; namely, the Palestine question, in a just and comprehensive manner.

Shevardnadze wished further success for the USSR-Syrian cooperation and voiced his conviction that this cooperation will continue to have a positive effect on the course of events in the region. He said: What strengthens our confidence in this regard is the detailed and deep exchange of views which we have had with His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, with Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, and with Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Holds News Conference

JN1902170689 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1550 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Damascus, 19 Feb (SANA)—Eduard Shevardnadze, member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR minister of foreign affairs, held a news conference in the USSR Embassy in Damascus at 1100 today. It was attended by correspondents of Arab and foreign news agencies and foreign television networks as well as representatives of press and news media in the country.

Shevardnadze expressed deep satisfaction with the outcome of the talks he held with the Syrian leadership, led by President Hafiz al-Asad. He said the USSR leadership attaches great importance to the relations with the Syrian Arab Republic. There is a regular and intensive political dialogue, including dialogue on the summit level, between Moscow and Damascus, he added.

Shevardnadze explained that he conveyed a personal message from Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev to President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday. The message deals with important aspects of the current world political situation, USSR-Syrian relations, and the overall situation in the Middle East, he said. He pointed out that he held talks with President Hafiz al-Asad on a host of issues contained in this message. President Hafiz al-Asad presented deep and extremely important ideas and views which provide the possibility of a better view of numerous issues and also a clearer conception regarding the scope of cooperation and dealings between the USSR and Syria, which are currently good. Moreover, both parties wish to promote relations in all fields, he said.

Shevardnadze added: Talks with the Syrian leadership were serious and fruitful. I was convinced that there are no differnces in our stands on the absolute majority of issues. The two parties stressed the dynamic development of USSR-Syrian relations with its positive implications. Moreover, there has been specification of the important outlines to continue both the strong cooperation and the subsequent promotion of political dialogue in favor of enhancing the friendship between the two countries and consolidating peace and security in the Middle East and the whole world, he added.

Shevardnadze explained that the two parties agreed to hold political consultations on a periodic basis. The foreign ministries in both countries wil sign a special protocol in this regard. He pointed out that during the visit special attention was paid to the promotion of relations between the two countries in various fields, including the military field, in addition to promoting trade and economic relations in general to achieve mutual benefit for both parties and to fully use the two countries' resources and capabilities.

Shevardnadze asserted that Syria is a direct partner in the Middle East conflict and wants to achieve a quick settlement because part of its territories in the Golan Heights is occupied. He said: Our Syrian friends presented to us an assessment of the current situation in the Middle East and views were exchanged with the Syrian leadership on the ways and means to attain a comprehensive settelement. The USSR and Syria advocate collective methods to resolve the issue. We call for holding an international conference on the Middle East and we believe that it is important to activate efforts in order to prepare for this conference and that this should become a central issue.

Shevardnadze went on to say that it is important that the UN security Council be brought into the affair, given its potential power to establish peace. We are prepared, added Shevardnadze, to discuss the matter in a special Security Council session at the foreign ministers level. We are also ready for intensified consultations with the other permament Securiy Council members. These can function as a preparatrory committee for the conference by engaging in contacts with the parties to the dispute.

He pointed out that the United Nations' services and those of the UN secretary general may be called upon in order to work out such flexible formulas as may be acceptable to all the parties. He indicated that understanding must be reached on drawing up a timetable for the preparatory stage which he suggested could be set at no more than 9 months.

The Soviet foreign minister said agreement has been reached on setting up a special working team to hold regular consultations on matters related to preparing and convening the international conference. Meetings between the foreign ministers of our two countries will be more frequent, added Shevardnadze.

During his talks in Damascus, said the minister, he expressed support for creating a nuclear free zone in the Middle East. He also showed positive interest in creating a UN-sponsored center to spare the Middle East the threat of war. The two sides agreed to exhange views on the subject.

His talks also touched on Lebanon, with both sides emphasizing support for the country's territorial integrity and preparedness to attain this end through all means possible. The USSR and Syria are both on record as backing the mission of the Arab League Lebanon committee, added Shevardnadze.

The Soviet foreign minister said he was happy with the outcome of his visit to Syria, indicating that his talks addressed the key issues in the region and touched on substantive issues.

Replying to another question, Shevardnadze said that for obvious reasons no dialogue is being conducted with the United States on the Middle East or other issues. I think the United States now takes into account new factors in the Middle East, he added. Shevardnadze said he had sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker informing him of his impending 10-day trip to the Middle East and that should new ideas emerge he would discuss them with him when the two meet in Vienna for conventional arms reductions talks on 16 March 1989.

Asked about Israel's intransigence, the Soviet foreign minister said this is quite a problem. What is needed now, he added, is for the UN Security Council members to engage in serious dialogue.

Shevardnadze said he highly appreciates the recent trip to the Middle East by an EC delegation comprising the foreign minsters of Greece, Spain, and France, indicating that the EC has an important role to play in the region. Shevardnadze said the USSR and EC positions have much in common mainly on the need to convene an international conference. He was deeply grateful to the Syrian leadership, particularly President Hafiz al-Asad, for the hospitality, comradeship and cooperation shown him during his visit to Syria.

Departs 19 Feb

JN1902144089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1415 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze left Damascus at 1400 today following a 3-day visit to the country. He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', the two assistants to the foreign minister, the Syrian ambassador in Moscow, the directors of the East Europe and Protocol Departments at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the USSR ambassador in Damascus, heads of the socialist diplomatic missions in Damascus, and the USSR Embassy staff. Eduard Shevardnadze arrived in Amman a short while ago as part of his current tour of the region.

Communique Issued on Visit

JN1902201889 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1843 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] The following communique was issued on the visit [by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze]: At the Syrian leadership's invitation, Eduard Shevardnadze, member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and Soviet minister of foreign affairs, paid an official and cordial visit to the Syrian Arab Republic [SAR] 17-19 February 1989.

The guest laid a wreath on the martyrs' monument. President Hafiz al-Asad, secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and SAR president, received Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze who handed him a personal message from President Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Centrl Committee and chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium. President Hafiz al-Asad expressed his thanks for this message and asked Shevardnadze to convey greetings and good wishes to President Mikhail Gorbachev.

The Soviet guest also met with Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam. Talks were held between SAR Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. During the meetings and talks, which were held in an atmosphere of cordiality and intimate friendship, there was discussion of many issues of mutual interest. Emphasis was laid on the joint endeavor to consolidate and promote the mutually advantageous and multi-faceted cooperation between Syria and the Soviet Union in all fields.

The two sides pointed to the great importance of the Syrian-Soviet summit meeting held in Moscow in April 1987. This meeting defined the approaches designed to consolidate the cordial relations between the two countries. President Hafiz al-Asad stressed the invitation extended to Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, to pay an official and cordial visit to the SAR at a date to be agreed upon through diplomatic channels.

The two sides showed their satisfaction with the continuation of the successful, escalating growth of relations between Syria and the Soviet Union in all fields. These relations are founded on the strong basis of the treaty of friendship and cooperation signed on 8 October 1980. There was an in-depth discussion, characterized by mutual interest, of the scopes of the subsequent development in relations between Syria and the Soviet Union in terms of raising the multi-faceted cooperation between them, bolstering the mutual confidence, and the fruitful cooperation in all issues of interest to the two countries. Emphasis was laid on the fact that consolidating Syrian-Soviet relations does not only conform with the essential interests of the two countries' peoples but also serves the cause of struggle for the sake of peace, independence, and social progress. It is also considered an important factor in ensuring security and stability in the Middle East.

The two sides welcomed the growing approach toward clearing the world political atmosphere. They stressed their desire to enhance this approach by all means. The Syrian side emphasized the historic importance of the large-scale program to rebuild international relations, proposed by Mikhail Gorbachev during the UN General Assembly's 43d session. The two sides affirmed their readiness to coordinate the activity aimed at building a world free of nuclear arms and violence. They also stood alongside the intensification of efforts designed to find a solution to the overall disarmament issues, particularly the complete removal of nuclear and chemical weapons and the relinquishment of both space militarization and the manufacture of new types of the weapons of total annihilation.

The Soviet side welcomed Syria's decision to join negotiations on abolishing chemical weapons as an observer.

Syria and the USSR agree that removing regional hotbeds of tension in the world is a necessary precondition for establishing a comprehensive international order of peace and security. The two sides stressed the need for constructive efforts to reach solutions acceptable to parties concerned.

Talks between the two sides centered mainly on ways to reach a permanent, just, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. In this regard, the two sides expressed concern over the continued tense conditions in the area, something which negatively affect not only this region but the entire world as well.

The two sides firmly denounce the continuous Israeli occupation of Arab territories and demand Israel's withdrawal from all the territories occupied since 1967 and the recognition of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of self-determination and the establishment of the independent state in accordance with UN resolutions. They also demand a halt to illegal and wrong actions that the Israeli occupation authorities are practicing against the innocent Arab inhabitants. They voice their firm solidarity with the brave uprising of the Palestinian people against the Israeli occupation and repression.

The Syrian and Soviet sides affirm that the appropriate framework for establishing just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East is the convening of an international conference under UN supervision and with the participation of all parties concerned, including the PLO and all the permanent member states of the UN Security Council. They voiced their conviction in the need to intensify efforts and activate consultations to pave the way for convening this international conference.

Syria and the USSR voiced their solidarity with the Lebanese people's struggle to liberate all the Lebanese areas from Israeli occupation. They firmly insist on the immediate and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. The two sides supported efforts to effect the Lebanese nationmal reconciliation and to preserve Lebanon's Arabism, independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and supported efforts exerted by the six-member Arab League committee on Lebanon.

The two sides renewed their support for the Geneva agreements on Afghanistan and demanded a halt to foreign interference in Afghanistan affairs. They also support the formation of a widely representative Afghan government in which all the disputing parties will participate with the aim of preserving Afghanistan's independence, sovereignty, and territorieal integrity.

The two sides condemn all forms and phenomena of terrorism and call for intensifying international efforts to uproot terrorism. They agree that to effectively combat terrorism there must be a specific defintion of terrorism. The international conference will define the meaning of terrorism and distinguish between terrorism and the legitimate people's struggle.

The two sides noted the great importance of ties between the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the CPSU—ties which help strengthen cooperation between the two countries and entrench friendship between the peoples of Syria and the USSR, based on the mutual eagerness to deepen future ties and coordinate steps between Syria and the USSR in international affairs and on the Middle East problem.

The two sides agreed to hold regular consultations and to sign a cooperation protocol between the Syrian and the USSR foreign ministries. The two sides expressed profound relief over the meetings and talks held in Damascus.

Mr Eduard Shevardnadze conveyed the Soviet leadership's invitation to Mr Faruq al-Shar' to pay an official and cordial visit to the USSR. The invitation was accepted with gratitude and a date for this visit will be fixed later.

Afghanistan

AFP: Najibullah Declares State of Emergency

NC1802191289 Paris AFP in English 1900 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Excerpt] Kabul, Feb 18 (AFP)—Afghan President Najibullah declared a state of emergency Saturday in Afghanistan, due to start at midnight (1930 GMT).

Meanwhile Afghan rebels in Pakistan named the head of a proposed interim government and a future head of state in anticipation of the collapse of Mr. Najibullah's Soviet-backed government.

The state of emergency was called "in the face subversive and provocative actions by some groups", the Afghan Foreign Ministry said.

Under the emergency, which covers the whole of Afghanistan, some clauses in the Afghan Constitution are to be "either suspended or limited" and legislative authority is to be transferred to the executive. Kabul was calm in the period immediately following the announcement.

Mr. Najibullah had been expected to issue a statement on radio and television, but a journalist appeared instead to read out the text of the announcement made earlier to the foreign press by a Foreign Ministry spokesman.

The text accused the United States and Pakistan of pursuing a "policy of intimidation" and seeking to "stir up war within the country". Pakistan was further accused of "expansionist ambitions".

"Washington and Islamabad want the war to continue", it went on. "The task of the people and the state is not to allow our nation to be crushed".

Earlier, five tanks took up position at strategic points and soldiers carrying rocket launchers appeared on the streets of the capital. The military presence in Kabul has been gradually increased over the past two days.

A curfew was not imposed with the state of emergency but was expected to be announced later.

From Sunday, military authorities will be able to search private houses in the absence of their owners and to scrutinise all communications by telephone, letter, telegram or other means.

Freedom of association and the freedoms to strike and to demonstrate are suspended, and the government reserves the right to order "obligatory labour".

The text of the state of emergency, addressed to "brave Afghans", includes other limitations of freedom and indicates that special military and security courts will continue their activities.

The authorities have "advised" foreign journalists "not to go out in Kabul on Saturday evening". From Sunday journalists "must travel in groups accompanied by an official" and may not take photographs without prior authorisation.

The clampdown came three days after the completion of a Soviet troop withdrawal, ending a nine-year intervention, under the terms of a U.N.-brokered agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan signed in Geneva last year and guaranteed by the Soviet Union and the United States. [passage omitted]

'Text' of Emergency Decree

LD1802164989 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 18 Feb 89

["Decree" issued by President Najibullah declaring a state of emergency in the Republic of Afghanistan; date, place not given—read by announcer]

[Text] A decree by the president of the Republic of Afghanistan:

In the name of God, the merciful, and compassionate. A decree on the declaration of a state of emergency:

Over the past 2 years the Republic of Afghanistan has consistently supported national reconciliation for the peaceful solution of events inside and around Afghanistan, ending the war and fratricide, and restoring peace and stability in the country. This has been done in accordance with recent developments in the country in order to safeguard the people's interests within the international arena [as heard], and in conformity with the country's interest.

In light of this policy, an overwhelming majority of prisoners were released. Political and social freedom and freedom of activity by the political parties and press was secured. The new constitution was endorsed in the Grand Assembly by representatives of the people, and free and democratic elections were held for the Milli Shura. A coalition government was formed for the purpose of creating a broadbased government with the participation of nonparty personalities. A new political and government structure was formed in line with the country's conditions. All-round readiness inside and outside the country was announced for holding talks with all opposition forces, and in this respect, specific efforts and work, and constant and indefatigable tasks were accomplished.

All of these measures were based on the principle that the policy of national reconciliation is not a short-lived policy but a longlasting, legal process with good prospects. This was endorsed and supported by the people of Afghanistan in order to restore peace and stability, and end the war and fratricide.

Simultaneous with following a policy of national reconciliation inside the country in order to reach a political solution regarding the situation around Afghanistan, broad political and diplomatic initiatives and activities have taken place. Finally, as a result of the constructive and flexible position of the Republic of Afghanistan, the Geneva accords were signed. The Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union have carefully and earnestly observed their commitments with respect to these accords, as a result of which all Soviet forces were completely withdrawn from Afghanistan.

However, the other side, that is Pakistan and the United States, not only have not met their commitments on noninterference, but have repeatedly violated these accords in a blatant and ugly manner.

In violation of the Geneva accords, not only have camps for military training, weapons depots, offices, and centers for the activities of armed groups opposing the Afghan Government been maintained and strengthened in the territory of Pakistan, but extremists with very modern weapons have also been dispatched inside Afghan territory. They have carried out attacks on cities, civilians, economic installations, schools, and highways, and murdered citizens and stole their possessions.

The Pakistani military authories did not stop there. On one hand, they have strengthened their Armed Forces along the border, and on the other, they are trying to impose their choice of government on the armed Afghan extremist opposition groups in order to realize their expansionist plans against Afghanistan.

Some armed extremist groups have rejected the policy of national reconciliation and all the sincere and responsible actions by the Republic of Afghanistan for ending the war and bloodshed, and for restoring peace and calm in the country. Moreover, they have followed the path of continuing the war and bloodshed, which only benefits the alien and historic enemies of the Afghan people. They resist in an irresponsible and careless manner the wishes and overwhelming determination of the Afghan people.

During the past 2 years, since the declaration of the policy of national reconciliation, the extremist warmongering groups, the Pakistani military circles, and specific circles in the United States have expanded the scale of fighting and destruction in all dimensions, together with an extensive psychological war against the Republic of Afghanistan. Islamabad, Washington, and some other circles have continued, as before, the policy of worsening the political and military situation in and around Afghanistan, thus threatening peace and security in the region.

The purpose of all these measures is, on the one hand, to prevent reconciliation, national understanding, and a political solution to the situation in Afghanistan; and on the other to continue the war and bloodshed in Afghanistan. This situation poses serious dangers to the political independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the country.

Under such circumstances and conditions it is the national, historic, and legal duty of the people and the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan not to permit the existence of the homeland and life of the Afghan people to be threatened by the danger of elimination and chaos.

Therefore, with the help of God and the backing of the brave Afghan people, we declare an emergency throughout the country, in accordance with Paragraph 11, Article 70, and Article 143 of the Constitution of Afghanistan, beginning tomorrow, 19 February 1989, in order to prevent and abort armed violation from abroad, to aid in the resolute defense of Afghanistan's political independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, national heritage and values, for the fulfillment of the causes of national reconciliation in the land of all Afghans, and for ensuring peace.

While the emergency situation continues, the activities of executive, legislative, and judicial bodies and political parties, including social organizations, and also the rights and duties of citizens and those organizing political life among society, will be organized and practiced in keeping with the Constitution and the profound observance of its Articles 143 and 144, and in accordance with the Emergency Law and other laws in force in the country.

In line with the authority delegated to the president by Paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of Article 143 of the Constitution, I endorse the following starting from the time of the imposition of the emergency situation.

1. The authority of the Milli Shura of Afghanistan will be transferred to the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Afghanistan in line with Paragraphs 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of Article 81 of the Constitution.

2. Articles 30, 46, and 49 and the last paragraph of Article 51 and Article 60 of the Constitution will limit. [sentence as heard]

3. Articles 44, 45, 50, and 53 of the Constitution will be suspended. The circumstances of the limitation and suspension of the aforementioned articles of the Constitution will be set out in the Emergency Law.

4. Courts of the state security and Armed Forces will continue their activities in line with the provisions of the enforced laws.

Dear compatriots, while we have full confidence in the active participation of true patriots and credible personalities of the country, and all national and peace-loving forces, we, for the assurance of all our compatiots, declare that these measures will go into effect for the confident defense of the country, for ensuring peace and security in the country, and for the implementation of the national reconciliation policy—not for war and the continuation of bloodshed.

It is natural that an emergency situation—which is being declared due to causes—has a temporary aspect. I am confident our compatriots can quickly end the emergency situation by fulfilling their daily national and Islamic duties, which they will carry out in ensuring the defense of and peace in the country.

Noble compatriots, brave Afghans. The country of freedom-loving and gallant Afghans is confronted by a great historic test. Any political or national idea you entertain, wherever you are, in military barracks, in farms or schools, in villages, offices, or factories, you must pass this test with Afghan bravery and Islamic faith, with self-sacrifice and pride, with your head held high, like your forefathers, trusting God; and for the sake of love for your country and the high ideals of the people; and to ensure peace, understanding, and national reconciliation in the land of Afghans. Success comes from God.

Speech on Emergency Measures

LD1902219589 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1630 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Speech by President Najibullah; date, place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, compassionate. Dear compatriots, in last few day you have witnessed measures and events which can be described as the direct gain and fruit of the national reconciliation policy. Part of these historical events is the completion of the withdrawal from Afghanistan of the Soviet limited contingents, which was implemented as a result of constant and all-round efforts by the state of the Republic of Afghanistan in accordance with the spirit of the Geneva accords.

At present, there is not even one Soviet soldier in Afghanistan. These days, all the Afghans remember those memories, full of ups and downs, of the events and incidents which took place in our country during the last 10 years.

We have traversed a long and hard path. Walking along this difficult road of life was too heavy for our people, and they paid an enormous price. The harvests were set on fire. Lands and orchards were trampled. Canals, streams, and wells were destroyed. The means of peaceful living were taken away from the hands of the toiling human beings of this lands. Roads, bridges, telephone and electricity lines, which are in fact the vital links of our country's economy, were destroyed and do not function. Schools, religious schools, factories, health centers, public establishments, and properties of our people were burned in the flames of anger and revenge. Fraternal respect, sincerity and pleasantness, sympathy and hospitality, traditional Afghan generosity, and the right of patriotic and Islamic fraternity, which filled soul and body and made up the fabric of our people, were damaged as a result of the cruel slaughtering and creation of tribal, organizational, and regional feuds and hostilities. They were replaced by vengefulness, hatred, and retaliation. The effects of the wounds of this war are imprinted on the bodies of children, men, women, the elderly and young of our country. Tens of thousands of our country's people, who are fit to work, have lost parts of their bodies. They became disabled and deprived of full participation of fullfilling their personal life and in reconstruction of their destroyed country. Millions of our compatriots either live in foreign lands and have an abject life away from their homeland in camps, or live as homeless people away from their original residnce in various corners of the country. Undoubtedly, we have all asked ourselves how can we free ourselves from this tragedy and pain of fratricidal war.

How do we get on with life in Afghanistan, our destroyed home? The answer to this question has not been the same everywhere. Every person, every group, and every part has supplied an answer to it according to their wish. A number want to wash blood with blood and are seeking to settle the past accounts and have thus declared this the solution. A number have chosen revenge, which undoubtedly will prolong the agony of war.

The last 10 years demonstrate that taking revenge to settle past accounts creates new and greater accounts, and the small seeds of revenge create large mounds of hatred and enmity. As a result of the continuation of this situation our country, this home of the Afghans, was gradually transformed into a great house of mourning. Moreover, the great energy of our compatriots, which should have been utilized for their own welfare, for their families, and, as a whole, for the great family of the Afghans, was transformed into a destructive and aimless energy. Does the shari'ah of Islam, the national interests of Afghanistan, and human mercy allow a continuation of such a shocking and tragic situation? Will the basis on which our Afghan identity and national unity are firmly founded be destroyed as a result of the continuation of such a situation?

As a result of such a situation, the policy of national reconciliation—as the only chance to end war and fratricide and to ensure a secure and peaceful future for the present and future generation of the country—was chosen and declared. The Republic of Afghanistan, with all sincerity and realism, thought responsibly at the time of outlining the fundamental lines of the national reconciliation policy in order to consider all the cases which are taken by the opposition as the bases or pretexts, tools of their war and struggle, and to eliminate all that created misunderstanding between the opposition and the state of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Fortunately, the state of the Republic of Afghanistan and the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan [PDPA] had and still have the courage to consistently realize their mistakes and shortcomings. We not only have not hidden our shortcomings, but have engaged in their rectification. We seriously criticize, in the future, the pursuit of extremist policies contrary to the national interests of the Afghans and the values of Afghan society. However, at present, there are sides which not only do not confess their mistakes and overactions, but stubbornly insist on killing Muslims and sowing seeds of discord among them.

Let us look briefly at the measures taken by the state of the Republic of Afghanistan since the declaration of the national reconciliation policy. We took the following steps. We declared a unilateral cease-fire. We released thousands of prisoners belonging to the opposition forces. We issued decrees on the return of transferrable and nontransferrable property of returnees. We approved the constitution which enshrines and preserves the interests of all citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan. We passed the new law on land and water relations. We held elections to the National Assembly. We created a coalition government with [words indistinct] political structure. We passed the law on political parties, aiming to preserve political pluralism and coalition. We signed the Geneva accords and, as a result of those, provided the basis for the complete withdrawal of the Soviet units.

Suffering compatriots, we leave you to judge that we left no avenue unexplored in order to draw the opposition closer to us for understanding and talks. There were no possible measures that we did not take in order to achieve compromise and the high goal of peace with various groups and the opposition. What we did within the framework of the national reconciliation policy is as clear as day. And how do they respond?

Now I am going to reveal the measures taken by the opposition as regards the national reconciliation policy. The extremists not only did not observe the cease-fire, but they fired on units and companies of the Armed Forces and launched missile attacks on residential areas and civilians. They even attacked their own armed groups that were observing the cease-fire. In the last 2 years of the national reconciliation policy a total of 300,000 missiles and shells have been fired in this country. They martyred more than 11,000 civilian compatriots including children, women, young, and elderly people.

The armed extremist groups rejected the negotiations. They killed members of the negotiation groups contrary to international and national norms and contrary to Afghan and Islamic tradition.

The extremists not only did not take part in the parliamentary elections but prevented elections being held in the regions under their control. They even martyred a number of the elected representatives from the regions which the extremists claim are under their control and which they captured.

In order to reduce the military confrontation and to encourage the emigres to return to the homeland, the state of the Republic of Afghanistan created demilitarized zones along the border with Pakistan. It recalled its Armed Forces from those regions. However, the armed extremists occupied those regions. They destroyed and set fire to public property. They plundered people's belongings and killed dozens of defenseless people. They claimed these inhuman actions as a victory. They fought among each other over the distribution of plundered goods and resorted to internecine clashes.

We proposed the creation of a broad-based coalition government with the participation of all forces, parties, and Afghan groupings. They not only irresponsibly rejected this proposal but clearly proved the lack of responsibility and their total inability to create their own joint administration in those regions under their control for various reasons. They resorted to internecine clashes in Konarha to ensure group domination. They left memories of destruction and devastation that could serve as a lesson.

If the opposition is sure of the people's support for them, then why is there so much interest in war? It should make an effort to establish peace and then the people, by expressing their own views and will, will vote for them.

We organize transportation to safeguard food supplies, trade, business, and other public services, but they plunder and burn the vehicles carrying foodstuffs, commercial goods, and other basic goods which are needed in this unbearably cold winter by women, children, orphans, and thousands of citizens who suffer from the lack of them. They store them in caves and their hideouts or smuggle them to Pakistan and sell them there.

They even embarked on using hoarders to hoard goods in the cities. They hypocritically distribute the looted goods here and there to people, but only a handful from the pile, as a token of assistance. How brave is the thief that carries a lamp!

From these examples it becomes clear who bears the real responsibility for the devastation in the country: the predators who want the war to continue. We can recount dozens more subversive, destructive, terrorist, and inhuman acts by the extremists, but recounting them can serve no purpose. So these examples are sufficient.

Let us ask the people who made such a fuss, saying that the intervention of Soviet forces had caused war and interference: Why have the war and the interference in our country's internal affairs intensified and not diminished since the Soviet forces left? We returned the Soviet units from the country and, like our forefathers, as brave Afghans we rely on ourselves and independently defend our home and country.

Let us look at the opposition. What is their situation? They are in Pakistan and every day they send deadly weapons against their miserable people and their country. They bring sorrow and death to our Muslim families. You judge who is defending the country.

In the first place the extremists rejected negotiations, and they were not prepared to conduct talks with any side. Later they agreed to talk to the Soviet Union, which they deemed a political victory. Following the negotiations they said that the aim of the talks was to create a division among the organizations and they boycotted it. A short time later half of the opposition organizations took a position in support of continuing the talks. Such positions in their own right demonstrate the opposition's lack of a united stance and specific program. It is clear that the rejection of talks with the Republic of Afghanistan and the soviet Union means the rejection of the political solution of Afghan problems and means opting for continuing the war.

Dear compatriots, you recently saw that the departure of the remaining Soviet forces had begun. Political logic and life's realities required that the opposition should in principle stop its combat activities, because for the last 10 years it justified its armed activities because of the presence of the Soviet forces. It rejected any condition or proposal of the government because of this. We ask: Why has the opposition intensified the war in the recent months since the Soviet forces began to withdraw from our country? Why has it embarked on obstructing the highways, the economic blockade of the cities, psychological war, sabotage, rumor-mongering, terrorism, bombing, and other activities against the country's internal and external security?

Now it is fully clear that the reason for the war and the opposition to the Republic of Afghanistan was not the presence of Soviet forces but those forces' presence was only a pretext that the extremists used for their destructive activities. The truth is that the leaders of the extremist groupings, who are in the hands of foreigners, want to serve as a means to carry out the policies of the Pakistani military and their international patrons.

All our people and the world were recently informed that the president of Pakistan had declared openly that the Afghans should accept Pakistan's role in Afghanistan's future and show their gratitude. It is obvious that such words were spoken in dealings with the leaders of the extremist parties by an authoritative figure of Pakistan.

There are other cases which demonstrate the sinister intention of the military and reactionary circles of Pakistan toward our country. When the limited Soviet contingents withdrew from our country they deployed their own military forces in the direction of Nangarhar and Qandahar, whereas when the Soviet armed forces were present—which Pakistan viewed as a great threat to itself—there were no Pakistani forces on our borders. It should be clear to each patriotic Afghan that after the Geneva accords were signed, the position of the Pakistani military hardened with regard to a solution of Afghanistan's situation, and the direct and indirect interference in our country's internal affairs assumed greater dimensions.

In view of this, the country's political-military situation is such that as a result of foreign interference, the enemies of the homeland should no longer be given an opportunity to threaten the national sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence, people's peace, and tranquillity. The interest of the defense of the homeland required that a state of emergency be declared to protect the gains of the national reconciliation policy and to ensure order in society, in accordance with Article 143 of the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan. Undoubtedly, the need and reasons for such a decision and the declaration of the state of emergency are obvious to our compatriots. What should one do? Should one allow the extremists to obstruct the highways and jeopardize the life of our free and noble people by encircling the cities? Should one allow the extremists to cause fear and disorder in the cities and devastation to other cities and localities? Should one allow in practice the independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the country to be seriously threatened by the deployment of Pakistani military forces near our country?

This state of emergency has been declared on the advice of true patriots who are not prepared for our innocent children to suffer any longer from the lack of a mother's love and for their compatriots to be vagrants and homeless in foreign countries. This is the advice of our true friends who want the honor of the people and the national heritage of the Afghans to be safeguarded and a free Afghanistan with national sovereignty and territorial integrity to be defended.

Therefore, we have taken all measures within the framework of the country's Constitution and in accordance with its articles. The declaration of the state of emergency does not mean turning back from the policy of national reconciliation; on the contrary, it means the consolidation of this policy and the creation of suitable grounds for its implementation. We did not want to declare the state of emergency, but the extremists, with the help of their backers, displayed their hostile intentions through open political and military interference in the affairs of Afghanistan, contrary to accepted international principles and the Geneva accords. In order to observe the implementation of the national reconciliation policy and in order to reassure [1-minute break in transmission] will maintain peace and tranquillity in our country and return to a normal situation from the state of emergency. I am fully confident that our compatriots, on the basis of the experience of life, the objective realities of our society, and the development of the political-military situation in the country, will have deeply realized the necessity of declaring this state.

Dear compatriots, our country is in a situation when all Afghans, in this critical and historical phase, will not spare any cooperation and sacrifice to defend the homeland, maintain peace, and put an end to war. They should not allow our beloved homeland to be further faced with destruction and internal war.

'Ulema and respected spiritual leaders, now that the military units of the Soviet Union have returned to their homeland and no reason for the continuation of war and bloodshed exists, we are directing all our efforts and possibilities toward establishing peace and tranquillity. However, notwithstanding all our efforts toward peace, the militarists of Pakistan have brought their forces of war closer to our country's borders with aggressive intent. They encourage the opposition to intensify war and fratricide, resulting in missiles being fired, consistent attacks, and the merciless killing of our children, our faithful old men, and Muslim women. Is such merciless killing of the Afghan Muslims at the hands of the opposition and the militarists of Pakistan in accord with shari'ah, praiseworthy Afghan traditions, and the great spirit of the monotheistic faith of Islam? Never, no. Therefore, the state of the Republic of Afghanistan and the people of this land have the right and duty, by repelling and rebuffing aggression, to defend the honor of the homeland and protect their lives and property.

Almighty God has said: You should give a fitting response to those who trespass against you, because they have encroached upon you. We hope the 'ulema and spiritual leaders of our country, who are the descendents of the prophets—peace be upon them—who are the spiritual guides of our society, and who engage in guiding the armed groups, advise them that highway robbery, bloodshed, and theft of public property are great sins. The history of our country is full of the sacrifices of the elders and guides of faith, and our state earnestly desires to protect their honor and prestige and calls them as the very sincere creation of God Almighty to perform their great religious duties.

A Persian poem says: If you see there is a blind man with a well in front of him and if you sit and say nothing, that is a sin. We want the religious leaders of our country who have consistently stood on the side of righteousness to go before the national sacred jihad, as was the custom of their ancestors such as (Mullah Mushk-i 'Alam), (Mullah Najmuddin), (Mullah Fayz Muhammad), and other defenders of the faith and the homeland, to safeguard the independence and territory of the beloved homeland and to preserve peace in it.

Courageous personnel of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, in the last 10 years you have defended the homeland and the people in the traditions of Afghan manhood, of our fathers and forefathers. Wherever you are in the country, in military barracks or in trenches, in the heights of the Afghan mountains, in the valleys and foothills of the homeland, on the high mountains of the Hindu Kush, which are the cradles of our national heroes and patriots, independently and zealously defend the homeland, territorial integrity, independence, and national sovereignty of Afghanistan. You in whose veins the blood of the brave fathers of the homeland runs prove to our people and the people of the world that you are the true sons of the homeland and are able to defend independently and decisively the independence of the country, the homeland, and peace in our persecuted land.

Let us recall the country's war of independence. The best sons of the homeland obtained this valuable legacy at the cost of their pure blood and left it to us in trust. In the noble cause of the defense of the country you have on your side the assistance of Almighty God and the unsparing help of the courageous and patriotic Afghans. Use every possibility and block the path of the dangerous activities of thieves and highway robbers. The defenseless people of the homeland expect you to provide them with food. They have set their sights on your heroism so that after the return of the military limited contingent of the Soviet Union you will defend the peace and security of the homeland and their tranquillity. The people will never forget the true defenders of the homeland. The homeland, people, and the new history of Afghanistan will inscribe your names in gold and will remember them with pride.

National and social personalities, 'ulema and scholars, history shows that the creditable national personalities, scholars, and honest servants of the people had an effective role in resolving problems and conflicts. You enjoy special prestige and popularity among the people. People believe in your sincere words and your just invitation. You should use all your scientific capabilities and your moral resources to end the fratricidal war. Explain with your acute and persuasive logic the nature of the war, which has left unfortunate effects on the morale and present structure of our country. You can use the sword of your logic for the defense of your grateful people. Invite those who are still unaware of the dangerous results of their destructive activities to peace and compromise by using the light of your knowledge and your national and moral influence.

National investors, businessmen, and private investors, in accordance with the Constitution the state of the Republic of Afghanistan has prepared the basis for you to strengthen and develop trade and industry. We anticipate that attracting foreign investments and the development of light and fast-growing industry will provide the basis for your fruitful work and activities.

The state is prepared to create mixed enterprises even with a greater share for traders in the sphere of private investments. The state invites all Afghans to participate in reviving the country's ruined economy. We invite our emigre compatriots, or their representatives, in Europe, the United States, and other countries to invest in the private sector of the economy. The state of the Republic of Afghanistan will soon announce its new economic policy towards the private sector. This policy leaves open all courses for the development and progress of trade and industry for the national traders and businessmen.

Self-sacrificing members of the PDPA, with united and cohesive ranks prepare for the defense of the homeland and people. You, who are the best heirs of the freedom-loving and patriotic traditions, do not allow the ancient enemies of the Afghans break your cohesive ranks. You should strengthen the spirit of serving the country's toiling people and serve the noble Afghan people with a firm defense of the territorial integrity and independence of our beloved country. Your party, which fought against the reactionary forces, despotism, oppression in the 24 years of self-sacrificing struggle, invites you to the resolute and armed defense of the interests of the people of the homeland, independence, and territorial integrity.

By joining the ranks of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan you enhance your combat strength and the authority of your great party family. You, who are the true heirs of all the sacrifices of the country's past generations, face a great test. Stand up with an open heart, with a heart full of love for the country, with revolutionary tolerance, and with an iron fist against the tyrants of freedom, against those who sell the country, and assassins and highway robbers; and convince the people and the world by your actions that you are the humble servants of your people and are able to defend the high interest of your country and people.

Political allies, national and patriotic forces of the country, our country is at a delicate stage in its history. Following the declaration of the national reconciliation policy you have done much to implement the national causes of the Afghan people. The people pinned their hopes on the bright prospects of the joint activities of the patriots. The patriotic positions of the parties, organizations, and social forces and the role of every one of them in this difficult and transient stage of the country's history will be recorded in the history of Afghanistan. The people of the country will judge the patriotic and joint acts and measures of the political organizations.

The Afghans' national unity and solidarity is becoming a thorn in the enemies' sides. We can reach new horizons of comprehensive agreements. Defend the country and the honor of the people.

Young people of the country, your belted waists and manly shoulders guarantee the independence and pride of our beloved country, our dear Afghanistan. We, like our forefathers, call you to good thoughts and deeds. Use your efforts and talents unsparingly in the service of the people and for the prosperity of our beloved country from a sense of love for the country. The future of the country, its construction and prosperity need your hands and minds. You are the country's future builders, scientists in various spheres, national heroes, doctors, engineers, and the architects of the country's future. Prepare yourselves to heal the wounds caused by the fratricide and to rebuild the country. The country needs you. In such conditions the people pin their hopes on you. We call on you to think responsibly for the people and the country. In addition, reinforce the ranks of the Armed Forces, the country's guard and the champion of the path of peace, by joining them.

Commanders of the opposition's armed groups, so far you have waged an armed resistance because of the Soviet presence. They have returned to their country. The continuation of the war and bloodshed henceforth can only result in the destruction of the country. We have honestly and courageously offered our hand to you. If you did not shake our hand of Afghan brotherhood with honesty and warmth, the responsibility for all destruction and decimation rests on your shoulders. We want you to turn from those who sacrifice your youth and blood for the country's enemies to obtain dollars and temporal worldy wealth. Your responsibility is greater than that of anyone else because you have the arms. Do not allow the enemy to use your heroism and bravery to destroy your own home with your own hands for their benefit. Do not orphan your sons by continuing the war. You who have the strength of work and action, put an end to the war. Cultivate your orchards, lands, and farms. Invest your capital and earn an honest livelihood in accordance with the tenets of the Koran. The state is prepared to provide all facilities for you in the fields of trade, husbandry, agriculture, orchards, and transportation.

Compatriot farmers, you who plow the land with your strong hands and who produce honest food for yourselves and God's creatures, look now at your lands. The accursed war has converted the green lands to unharvested fallow ground filled with weeds. Underground irrigation tunnels and canals are gone. The reconstruction of God's land needs your strong hands. War is a satanic measure. Curse the war and the warmongers. Sow the seed of good on earth, which belongs to Almighty God. Now that there is no excuse left for the continuation of war, return to your beautiful villages and resume your peaceful lives.

Toiling workers of the homeland, who by high political awareness have kept the wheels turning for the country's economic development, you more than anyone else realize the nature of this imposed war and its negative effects on your work. The imposed war has damaged the level of production and has had a negative effect on your family life and economy. In these conditions the homeland expects more work and sacrifice from its sons. External enemies, in collaboration with a number of traitors, want to deprive our beloved homeland of its freedom and independence. They have stretched their filthy hands toward our homeland intending to plunder our rich mines, natural and human resources. We call on you and all compatriots to cut these dirty hands and gouge the greedy eyes of the enemies by closing ranks and with great national unity. We call on you in these delicate stages of the homeland's history to use all your strength and experience for better and greater production. Resolutely defend the factories, mines, and projects which have been built with your strong hands.

Patriotic artisans, the imposed war has deprived you of a market and has made it difficult to supply raw materials. The lack of raw materials and a market make life increasingly difficult for you and your family. The enemies of peace are the enemies of your prosperity. They block trade routes. In such conditions we invite you to stand in a great national unity against the enemies of the homeland and country and the enemies of your and your children's prosperity.

Courageous Afghan girls and women, the war has brought calamity to your mothers and children more than anyone else. We feel the great tragedy, the warm [words indistinct] of our compatriot mothers and sisters and the pale faces of the orphaned children of the homeland. You are the legitimate heirs of the Malalays and Zarghunas [legendary Afghan women]. In order to perform the duties of motherhood and to safeguard the lofty stance of mothers, all our mothers and sisters should play their seemly part in the defense of the country against the enemies of the homeland who deny the talent and dignity of women.

Fraternal nationalities residing in our united country of Afghanistan, Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, Turkmans, Baluchis, Nurestanis, Pasha'is and other compatriot and coreligionist nationalities and brethren, strive without any kind of national, religious, or linguistic discrimination for the sacred cause of maintaining peace and tranquillity in your ancestral land in fraternal, Islamic, and Afghan unity and solidarity. Do now allow those who are in the hands of the enemy damage your national rights by their warmongering actions, and incite division and hostility among our nationalities and coreligionist brethren and use it to promote external interests. With vigilance and awareness, with a lofty patriotic, national and Islamic feeling foil their antinational and antireligion activities which serve the interests of the historic enemies of our country.

If we are from Balkh or Qandahar, we are all the sons of the same mountain, we are all passengers in a stormy ship on this vast ocean. Estranged refugees, we think of your sad plight with a clear conscience. Our hearts cry for you. If until yesterday you were surrounded by barbed wires and were prevented from returning home on the pretext of the Soviet forces' presence and if they were thus accumulating wealth in your name from your account but in your absence, and were acquiring equipment for murder and plunder, now these pretexts have gone. Do not allow yourselves to live in this misery. We are with you. You have a vigilant nation and proud homeland behind you. Return to Afghan fraternity. Is it not unbearable for you who are proud Afghans—and your patriotism is well known in the world—to live any longer in refugee camps? There hunger, starvation, lack of medicine, and primarily absence from the homeland keep your children separate from [word indistinct] and your families. The enemy wants to make them strangers to their ancestral heritage and to kill the embryo of patriotism and courage in them. Leave the tents and camps and say goodbye to misery and absence from the homeland.

The homeland awaits you. Come to the homeland and sow your untouched lands and enjoy the beautiful valleys and mountains of your homeland. Come to the homeland, breathe the fresh air of your beloved homeland instead of the polluted, dry, and disease-ridden air of the foreign deserts. Your relatives, families, brothers, and friends every day await your return. Come to the homeland, say prayers in your mosques and (?work) for the prosperity of your beautiful country. Schools await your children. The homeland needs your strong hands. Afghans have never lived in others' shadows and under others' protection and have never sat on anyone else's rug. Choose the soil of the homeland to the marble palaces of others. Estranged compatriots, we await your return.

Courageous brothers of the country's border tribes and nomads, you have a proud history. The struggle against aggression has become your tradition. The enemy of your ancestral land threatens your mountains, forests, and pastures. You are being tested. The freedom-loving people and courageous defenders of the freedom and independence of the homeland have set their sights on you during these trying times. We invite you to participate in the common destiny of struggle for peace and the defense of the best interests of the people of Afghanistan. we believe that you will be on the side of the compatriots in repelling and rebuffing the aggression of the enemy.

Pashtun and Baluch brothers, with the historical links, fraternity, and the blood you share with the Afghans, do not let extremist forces and their protectors embark upon aggression from your territories against your Afghan brothers. Your and Afghanistan's common enemies are trying to bring our territory under their control and realize their sinister plans for dismemberment against the people of the region. Help the returnees and escort them from your regions. We are expecting the silence of the Pashtun and Baluch tribes, vis-a-vis the alien interventionists, which has manifested itself in the form of the Pakistani militarists, to end. The tribal belt once again should display historical solidarity to the world in the face of the plundering aggressors.

People of Afghanistan, our homeland and people are facing a great test. With the help of Almighty God and relying on the unbreakable will of the people, all the difficulties and problems will be eliminated.

In the course of the continuation of the period of emergency, all the state organs will have the duty to consolidate legality and maintain order and discipline proportionate to the necessities of the present phase. Observation of the law of emergency and the law of the supreme council of the homeland, the enforced laws, and in particular the articles of the Constitution is the duty of all noble people of the country. In rendering this national and historical task, every patriotic Afghan could play his worthy role in the defense of peace and the maintenance of tranquillity in the country.

Dear compatriots, the PDPA, its political allies, and the state of the Republic of Afghanistan will defend the policy of national reconciliation, and hold a dialogue and reach an understanding with the opposition forces. We are ready, while simultaneously carrying out our duties, to treat every person, every group, and every organization responsibly—be it at home or outside the country—in the armed defense of the homeland and the people. We want, in daily action, to convince them of the futility of resorting to a military solution, one-sided victory, and fighting. Moreover, we want to negotiate with every political personality and every individual who can cooperate in maintaining peace and reconciliation and in the creation of dialogue and understanding and thus, on the basis of the love of the homeland, the will of the people, and the urgent necessity for maintaining peace in the country, find the way of understanding and cooperation.

We know that sensible individuals well understand that we, even in the most difficult conditions and at a time when we have powerful armed forces, do not lose sight of the policy of national reconciliation as the only realistic alternative for maintaining peace and tranquillity in the land of the Afghans and as a very important task. Our opponents, therefore, should know that we have chosen the policy of national reconciliation to realize the aspirations of the people and bring the war to an end.

However, if the enemies of our country's peace and tranquillity view this policy of ours as a sign of weakness and abuse our leniency, then why should they be allowed to further ruin our country? We can no longer tolerate the thieves, highwaymen, and warmongers who disturb the sound sleep of our people with their noisy explosions, who launch rockets, and who take the bread out of the children's hands. We will speak a different language to those who do not accept peace and who continue bloodshed and war. We will still offer our hand to those who respond to the peace-seeking call of the people.

Now that there are no longer Soviet forces in Afghanistan and now that the Republic of Afghanistan has completely fulfilled its obligations under the Geneva agreements it hopes that the Pakistani side will adopt a responsible and realistic attitude toward this credible international document and honestly observe its obligations in accordanace with the Geneva agreements. All these will certainly help to normalize relations between the two countries. The Republic of Afghanistan wants relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan to become normal, and for these to be upgraded to good-neighborly relations.

We also want good-neighborly relation with Iran. We would like to have friendly relations with all countries based on principles of respect for independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and noninterference in the internal affairs of one another.

The Republic of Afghanistan wishes that at this delicate stage in our country's history as a demonstration of the will of the international community the United Nations will play its part effectively in accordance with the Geneva agreements and the resolution of the 43d United Nations General Assembly session and help to ensure peace and national understanding in Afghanistan.

We are fully confident that the country's sky will be cleared once again of the fog of war and killing and vendetta, and that the peace-loving people of Afghanistan will engage in the healing of the wounds of war and the country's reconstruction and revival. Success comes from God.

Najibullah Signs Decree on New Cabinet

LD1802165289 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 18 Feb 89

["Presidential decree" on new cabinet appointments signed by President Najibullah; date, place not given—read by announcer]

[Text] Based on the instruction of the Article 104 of the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan and taking into account the proposal dated 18 February by the Council of Ministers, I appoint the following people:

Burhannuddin Qiasi, minister of commerce;

Sher Jan Mazduryar, civil aviation minister;

'Abdul Bahar, as minister of light industry and foodstuff;

Khudadad Isma'il Danesh, minister of higher and vocational training;

Sayyed Amin Zara, minister public health;

Sayyed Akram, minister of returnees' affairs;

'Abdul Ghafur Baher, minister of Islamic affairs and endowment;

Dr Nur Ahmad Bares, minister without portfolio at a level above the top rank [dari bast-e kharj-e rotba].

The Council of Ministers is commissioned to present the issue to the next session of Milli Shura for a decision. The decree should be sent to the Justice Ministry to be published in the official Gazette.

[Signed] Najibullah, President of Afghanistan

Wakil Says Najibullah To Head Military Council

LD1902150789 London BBC World Service in English 1500 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] The Afghan Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil has said that a supreme military council is to be formed shortly and that additional security measures would be adopted in Kabul and the provinces. In a BBC interview he also explained some of the reasons behind the latest cabinet reshuffle, saying there had been shorthcomings in the handling of the country's food and fuel supplies. Lyse Doucet reports from Kabul:

[Begin Doucet recording] The new Supreme Military Council for the Defense of the Homeland will be responsible for coordinating all military, economic, and political activities. Mr Wakil, who is a member of the ruling party's Politburo, said President Najibullah would lead the council. Party and non-party members would sit on it. He resisted the idea that Afghanistan was moving to military rule, saying the new body would not replace the Council of Ministers—an explanation which still does not hide the military's growing powers.

Mr Wakil said new security measures would be introduced over the next few days in Kabul and the provinces, among them more systematic searches of houses for guerrilla arms caches. Mr Wakil described the state of emergency as a precautionary measure to check all kinds of conspiracies and sabotage by the guerrillas and their Pakistani allies. He said the government had recently captured agents of the mujahidin parties and they had confiscated trucks and other vehicles coming from Pakistan, which had been carrying a ton of explosives. New security measures were a sign of strength, not weakness, he said, pointing out that all forces including civilians, were being mobilized in the country's defense.

When asked about reasons for the cabinet reshuffle, Mr Wakil said the replacement of ministers was a normal process, but he added that there had been shortcomings in the organization of food and fuel supplies for the capital. Those ministers dealing with this sector had been replaced by party members whom, he said, could be depended upon to take their responsibilities more seriously. He explained that guerrilla blockades of the main roads and bad weather were partly responsible for the recent shortages. But the government had also been slow to transport food and fuel from northern Afghanistan where they were in abundance. We cannot take a liberal view of this kind of shortcoming, he said.

Najibullah Decree on Defense Council Composition

LD1902163289 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Feb 89

["Decree" issued by President Najibullah on the composition of the newly formed Supreme Defense Council of the Homeland; date, place not given—read by announcer]

[Text] A decree by Esteemed Najibullah, the president of Afghanistan, about the new composition of the Supreme Defense Council of the Homeland:

According to the instruction of Article Five of the law of the defense council of the homeland, I approve the appointment of the following people as the members of the Supreme Defense Council of the Homeland:

Mr 'Abdul Rahim Hatif, vice president and deputy head of the Supreme Defense Council of the Homeland;

Mr Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, Politburo member and PDPA Central Committee secretary and deputy head of the Supreme Defense Council of the Homeland;

Lieutenant General Muhammad Rafi', vice president;

Lieutenant General Ghulam Faruq Ya'qubi, minister of state security;

Major General Muhammad Aslam Watanjar, minister of internal affairs;

Lieutenant General Shahnawaz Tanay, defense minister;

Mr 'Abdul Wakil, foreign affairs minister;

Mr Najmuddin Kawiani, Politburo member and PDPA Central Committee secretary;

Mr Nayaz Muhammad Mohmand, Politburo member and PDPA Central Committee secretary;

Mr Haydar Mas'ud, Politburo Member and PDPA Central Committee secretary;

Mir Saheb Karwai, candidate member of the PDPA Central Committee Politburo;

Mr Farid Ahmad Mazdak, candidate member of the Politburo and first secretary of the DYOA;

Lieutenant General Nazar Muhammad, candidate member of the PDPA Central Committee Politburo;

Mr Muhammad Da'ud Razmier, secretary of the Kabul city party committee;

Brigadier General Muhammad Eshaq Tokhi, adviser to the president;

Major General 'Abdul Haq Ulumi, head of the Armed Forces Section of the PDPA Central Committee and secretary to the Supreme Defense Council of the Homeland;

Major General Muhammad Afzal Lodin, first deputy defense minister and high commander of Kabul garrison;

Major General Muhammad Asef Delawar, commander of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Afghanistan;

Major General 'Abdul Ghafur, high commander of the Air Force and the Air Defense Forces;

[Signed] Najibullah, president of Afghanistan

Council Holds Meeting

LD1902155788 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] The Supreme Defense Council of the Homeland met this afternoon at 1730 hours (local) under the leadership of Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, at the Presidency Headquarters.

Esteemed Najibullah spoke about the present political-military situation in the country and about the high morale level and combat capability of the Armed Forces. He said: In the present situation and condition, when the foreign forces put our country's territorial integrity and political independence in danger, our people and national sovereignty believe that the country's Armed Forces more than at any other time will bravely protect our free and ancient country by recording proud epics and displaying heroism and bravery.

The president of Afghanistan added that the epics of the Armed Forces personnel are not only written in golden letters in the contemporary history of our country, but they will also be remembered in the future with pride and honor.

Najibullah Chairs Council of Ministers Meeting

LD1902172989 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1630 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] A session of the Council of Ministers was held this afternoon at the headquarters of the Presidency under the chairmanship of Esteemed Najibullah, the president of Afghanistan.

During the session, the draft of the law on the state of emergency and the draft of the law on the Supreme Defense Council of the Homeland were studied and discussed. These laws were approved. Esteemed Najibullah drew the attention of the members of the Council of Ministers to the new situation and the duties emanating from it. In reply, the members of the Council of Ministers, understanding their important duties in the present condition of the country, pledged to show self-sacrifice in fulfilling their duties.

Constitution Council Discusses New Laws 19 Feb

LD2002154188 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] The Constitution Council of the Republic of Afghanistan met at 1700 today under the chairmanship of Esteemed Najibullah, the president of Afghanistan, in his office. The session assessed the Law on the State of Emergency and the Law on the Supreme Council for the Defense of the Homeland. After indepth discussion and assessment, the conformity of these laws with the Constitution was confirmed.

Najibullah Talks With Sharq, Officials

LD1802185789 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Esteemed President Najibullah today met with the chairmen and leaderships of both houses, the Senate and the Wolasi Jirgah of the Milli Shura of the Republic of Afghanistan regarding the internal situation and the situation around Afghanistan, and the further duties of the state in this regard.

Esteemed Najibullah met today at the headquarters of the presidency with the Toiler Revolutionary Organization of Afghanistan, the Toiler Organization of Afghanistan, the Islamic Party of Afghan People, the Peasants' Justice Party of Afghanistan, the Solidarity Movement of Afghan People, the Fadeyeen, and the Union of Ansorrolah. The esteemed president assessed the political-military situation in Afghanistan and specified the duties of the political parties at the present sensitive moment. In reply, the general secretaries and chairmen of the political parties and organizations expressed their complete readiness in connection with the new state measures for implementing the national reconciliation policy.

Esteemed Najibullah met this afternoon in his office with Prime Minister Muhammad Hasan Sharq. They discussed internal affairs, the situation concerning the Republic of Afghanistan and future state duties in view of these situations. The meeting was held in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding.

According to another report, Esteemed Najibullah also met this afternoon in this connection with deputies to the prime minister and members of the Council of Ministers.

BBC Reports Resignation of Prime Minister

BK2002123989 London BBC World Service in English 1200 GMT 20 Feb 89

[From the "Newsreel" program]

[Text] The political situation in Afghanistan has taken a new turn with President Najibullah apparently making further moves to consolidate his grip on power. Following the weekend's Cabinet reshuffle, reports from the capital, Kabul, now say that the prime minister, Mr Muhammad Hasan Sharq, has resigned. But, as Lyse Doucet reports from Kabul, it is not yet clear whether Mr Sharq left of his own accord.

[Begin Doucet recording] Rumors have circulated in Kabul about the prime minister's departure, many saying he had tendered his resignation officially for medical reasons. Government officials say Sharq and the president agreed that during the state of emergency, the president was, as they put it, the most suitable person to lead the Cabinet.

Sharq, who was outside the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, had been a symbol of a much publicized coalition government. He leaves as the party is strengthening its grip. A government reshuffle last week left the party holding about three-quarters of the Cabinet. A new 20-member Supreme Military Council includes only one man from outside party ranks. Until a few months ago, Sharq had a high public profile and some observers believed he was being promoted by Moscow. He was viewed in some circles as a possible alternative to President Najibullah—an independent who could overcome the mujahidin's refusal to deal with the party, but the mujahidin consistently rejected him, denouncing him as a Soviet agent. With the political stalemate and reports of the guerrillas' military preparations, President Najibullah has assumed even greater powers. His party, once known for its divisions, appears to be defiantly closing ranks at the moment.

Diplomats say it is not clear whether Sharq stepped down or was pushed back. In a situation in which he was becoming increasingly isolated, it was probably a better (?move). His family reportedly left Kabul in recent weeks officially for medical reasons. [end recording]

'Official Sources' Say Sharq Dismissed

BK2002145289 Hong Kong AFP in English 1445 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Kabul, Feb 20 (AFP)—Muhammad Hasan Sharq has been dismissed from his post as prime minister of the Afghan Government, official sources said here Monday. President Najibullah will from now on preside over the government following the state of emergency which went into effect Sunday, the sources added. Mr. Sharq has not officially resigned, they said.

Najibullah Appeals to U.S. for Peace, Assistance

LD1702200189 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah, the president of Afghanistan, received this morning an NBC television team from the United States for an interview at Gol Khanah Palace and replied to the various questions of the U.S. television correspondents.

In reply to a question the esteemed president said: At the moment, as all the Soviet limited contingents have returned to their country, there is no pretext for the armed opposition groups to continue the war. Also, there is no justifiable reason for the United States, Pakistan, or any other country to continue military assistance to the extremist groups and to interfere in the internal affairs of our country.

Esteemed Najibullah said in a part of his message addressed to the U.S. people, my message to the noble people of the United States is simple, for it comes from the heart of the suffering people of my country. What the people of Afghanistan need is more sympathy and economic assistance, not more guns and bombs. Our people want peace and hate war.

According to another report, the television interview of Esteemed Najibullah, the president of Afghanistan, with the U.S. NBC television team will be broadcast tonight all over the United States. It is due to be watched by more than 10 million U.S. citizens.

Foreign Ministry Assails U.S. Arms Supplies

LD1702184589 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] A spokesman of the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in commenting on recent assertions made by U.S. President George Bush at a press conference in the White House pledging assistance to the extremists elements, said the following:

The assertions by George Bush—made exactly at the time the Soviet military contingents returned to their country, in full conformity with the Geneva accords, and after the Afghan and Soviet sides had completely fullfilled their commitments to these accords—have surprised all peace-loving circles. Under present conditions, when all the possibilities for ensuring a nationwide peace are present and when our people are impatiently awaiting the establishment of peace in their country, the continued U.S. assistance can only result in the continuation of the fratricidal war among the Afghans.

The United States, by signing the Geneva accords, has agreed to refrain from any type of interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan and to respect the commitments listed in the bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan concerning noninterference. The continued U.S. assistance fully contradicts the provisions of this document, the observation of which is guaranteed by the United States as a superpower. We ask the U.S. authorities to look again at the documents of the Geneva accords, which they themselves signed. They will clearly see that none of the articles of these accords gives the United States the right to dispatch arms and ammunition to the opposition. Signing an international document and then violating it is an indication of the fact that the United States ignores its international commitments. This is against all accepted international principles and has given rise to a negative and dangerous reaction. This will seriously (?damage) the prestige of the United States, one of the world's great powers.

U.S. Actions 'Provoking' Escalation of War

LD1902094789 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0415 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Kabul, Feb. 18, BAKHTAR—At present, when the Soviet military contingents has left Afghanistan in conformity with the provisions of the Geneva accords, U.S. President George Bush's statement on the intention to continue military assistance to the Afghan opposition bewildered the peace-minded circles of the world public, said a spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan, RA.

Conditions have been created already for stopping the internal Afghan conflict as soon as possible, he continued. However, the actions of the U.S. Administration, far from promoting the termination of bloodshed, are provoking its escalation.

The spokesman of the Afghan Foreign Ministry has called upon the U.S. Administration to see that none of its articles allows that country to despatch arms and ammunitions to the opposition. The signing of an international document and then to violate it testify to the fact that the US Administration does not pay any heed to its international commitments. Such breaches by the U.S. as a guarantor of the Geneva accords are in full contradiction with the accepted international principles and are undermining its prestige and credibility as a great power of the world.

Further on Mujahidin Meeting in Rawalpindi

Fundamentalist Named as Head

BK1802081889 Hong Kong AFP in English 0805 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Rawalpindi, Pakistan, Feb 18 (AFP)—An Afghan resistance assembly meeting here approved Saturday the nomination of a Muslim fundamentalist hardliner as the head of a proposed interim rebel government in Afghanistan, resistance sources said.

The sources said Ahmad Shah would announce his cabinet Sunday and that Muhammed Nabi Muhammadi, a moderate, had been approved as president.

Mr. Shah, who has been opposed by moderates in the Pakistan-based alliance, was approved by a majority in the Shura by a show of hands, said one source. Delegates of Iranian-based resistance groups continued to boycott the assembly complaining of a lack of representation.

AFP on Ahmad Shah

BK1802143089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1409 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 18 (AFP)—Ahmad Shah, who was appointed Saturday [18 February] by a resistance assembly to head a proposed interim rebel government in Afghanistan, is a Muslim fundamentalist little known to the mujahidin's field commanders.

Mr. Shah belongs to the pro-Saudi Islamic fundamentalist Etehad-e Eslami faction of the seven-party resistance alliance based in Pakistan. He headed the first mujahidin interim government set up in February 1988. That government was dominated by the fundamentalists but never really worked.

He was picked for the post of prime minister by fundamentalist leaders, particularly those from his own party and the radical fundamentalist Hezb-e Eslami (Islamic Party) led by Gulbuddin Hikmatyar.

Often criticised by moderates for his links with fundamentalist extremists, Mr. Shah has also been criticised by resistance commanders in the field who see him as "an unknown politician," who has never taken part in the nine-year jihad or holy war against the Soviet-backed government in Kabul.

"Mr. Ahmad Shah has close links with both the Pakistani military and secret service," a diplomatic source said here.

The 46-year-old engineer was born in the village of Malang-Kurd near Kabul where he did most of his studying. In 1966 he obtained an engineering degree and worked for six years in the Ministry of Agriculture. In 1972 Mr. Shah obtained a United Nations scholarship to study in the United States where he earned a degree in civil engineering, before becoming a professor at the University of Malek-Faisal in Saudi Arabia.

He later became the head of the Finance Committee of the Etehad-e Eslami party.

Married to an American, Mr. Shah speaks several foreign languages including Arabic, English and French.

Mojaddedi Comments

BK1802160589 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] A special session of the Supreme Council of Afghan mujahidin was held in Islamabad [as heard] today. The session decided to appoint Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi as the acting chairman of the seven-party Islamic alliance council. He will enjoy the status of the president of interim government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The council also approved the appointment of Engineer Ahmad Shah as the executive head of the interim government or the prime minister. The interim government will replace the puppet Najibullah regime. The interim government's cabinet will be announced tomorrow.

Meanwhile, the consultative council of Afghan mujahidin continued discussion on the interim government today. Later, Professor Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, the former chairman of the Islamic Alliance of the Mujahidin of Afghanistan, said that he had stepped down from the chairmanship in favor of Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi in the greater interest of the Afghan people. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad this evening, he said that he had worked for 11 years for the sake of jihad in Afghanistan. I relinquished the position as I felt that my continuance in the post would hurt the interests of Afghans. In reply to a persistent question, he denied that the Pakistani Government or someone else exerted pressure on him to quit the position, adding that the decision was his own.

AFP Profiles Muhammadi

BK1802162189 Hong Kong AFP in English 1544 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Islambad, Feb 18 (AFP)—Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi, nominated as head of state by an Afghan resistance assembly Saturday, is a Muslim theologian seen as a proponent of compromise, analysts say here.

Mr. Muhammadi, 69, heads the Harakat-e Enqelab-e, one of three moderate factions within a seven-party Afghan resistance alliance based in Peshawar in Pakistan close to the Afghan border.

His faction, a centrist, traditional, nationalist grouping is not well-organised but is one of the few mujahidin groups to enjoy substantial popular support inside Afghanistan, particularly in the southern provinces of Qandahar and Helmand, as well as the capital Kabul.

However, the Harakat-e Enqelab-e has seen its influence diminish in recent years against that of better organised fundamentalist factions, particularly the pro-Saudi Etehad-e Eslami of Rasul Sayyaf.

Mr. Muhammadi is above all a man of compromise who seeks to conciliate traditional religious influence and the modern views and has recently distanced himself to some extent from the two other moderate rebel movements, analysts say.

An influential mullah, or Islamic scholar, Mr. Muhammadi studied at the Al-Azhar University in Cairo and was a member of Parliament under former Afghan monarch Zahir Shah from 1969 to 1973.

Mr. Muhammadi has said he would be willing, with certain provisos, to see the former monarch play a role in the current situation in Afghanistan. He also has friends in Afghan intellectual circles and within the current administration in Kabul. He was born to a devout family in Paktia Province bordering Pakistan in 1920.

Muhammadi on Power Transfer

LD2002114189 Kuwait KUNA in English 1028 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb 20 (KUNA)—An Afghan mujahidin leader was Monday quoted here as setting the tasks of the new interim Afghan government inside Afghanistan to include application of Moslem shari'ah law and rebuilding of that destroyed by war.

President-elect of Moslem Afghanistan and speaker of the mujahidin shura (consultative) council, Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi told AL-ITTIHAD newspaper, published here today, that transfer of power would take place soon, indicating that the mujahidin intend to conquer Afghan towns peacefully, or else by jihad or holy war.

The Afghan leader, who was interviewed by the paper in Rawalpindi, further confirmed complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, saying not a single Soviet soldier now remains on Afghan soil.

Muhammadi cautioned against internal squabble within mujahidin ranks, assuring that Afghan mujahidin leaders are in complete accord on substantial issues but there are minor differences over marginal matters, he admitted.

He said this problem of petty differences, which enemies of Moslem Afghanistan are trying to fan, receives top concern of the shura council, which is making plans and programmes for uniting mujahid ranks and guarding against the problem, Muhammadi stressed.

On internal matters, the Afghan leader indicated that communist collaborators with Najibullah's government in Kabul would be given chance to repent or face Moslem judgment.

Muhammadi commented that reports of a Soviet military build-up on Afghanistan's northern border remain unsubstantiated and hinted that, following their triumphant return, Afghan mujahidin would continue the struggle to "liberate the Al-Aqsa (mosque in Israeli-occupied Jerusalem) and set free their Moslem brothers in the Soviet Union."

Shura To Finalize Cabinet List

BK2002022889 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] The Afghan Consultative Council, or shura, will again meet in Islamabad [as heard] today to further discuss formation of the Afghan interim government cabinet. Council leaders presented the names of 35 ministers for the proposed cabinet in the Shura yesterday. The Shura asked the Supreme Council [of the Islamic Alliance of Mujahidin of Afghanistan] to prepare the list of cabinet ministers. It is expected that this list will be presented at today's session for approval.

Shura Names President, Premier

BK1802143589 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] A special session of the Supreme Council of seven-party Islamic Alliance of the Mujahidin of Afghanistan was held in Islamabad [as heard] today. The session decided to appoint Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi as the acting chairman of the seven-party Islamic Alliance of the Mujahidin of Afghanistan council and the president of the interim government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The session also approved the appointment of Eng Ahmad Shah as the executive head of the interim government or the prime minister. The interim government will replace the puppet regime of Najibullah.

Cabinet Seeks Vote of Confidence

BK1902124289 Hong Kong AFP in English 1226 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Rawalpindi, Pakistan, Feb 19 (AFP)—Several members of an interim Afghan rebel government were presented Sunday for an eventual vote of confidence at a resistance assembly meeting here, rebel sources said.

Leaders of the seven Pakistan-based Afghan resistance groups held long discussions earlier Sunday on the make-up of the government, the sources said.

Islamic fundamentalist Ahmad Shah and moderate Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi, whose appointments to form a government as prime minister and head of state were approved Saturday by the assembly, or shura, met overnight and in the morning, said the sources.

It was not clear whether approval would be given by secret ballot or a show of hands or whether the government was presented by the leaders of the seven resistance factions or by Mr. Shah and Mr. Muhammadi, said the sources.

The deliberations were taking place under the utmost secrecy and journalists have not been allowed inside the complex, guarded by some 100 mujahidin guards armed with Kalashnikov rifles.

If the government receives the vote of confidence it will have the authority to manage affairs of the resistance during an interim period.

It will be required to seek a vote of confidence again in six months time when another assembly is elected in rebel-held areas inside Afghanistan and refugee camps in Pakistan.

The interim government is to take over in Afghanistan following the fall of the Moscow-backed government in Kabul, says the resistance.

Radical fundamentalist Afghan resistance leader Gulbuddin Hikmatyar meanwhile thanked those world leaders "who stood by the mujahidin, taken a step or offered a prayer for the victory and defended jihad (holy war) against false propaganda.

"In this century the Afghan nation have repulsed and defeated two great colonialist aggressors, one after the other," he said in a press release received here Sunday. He called it "a historic victory" for Islam.

The message was addressed to Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her main opposition foe Nawaz Sharif, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, Iranian President 'Ali Khamane'i, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and the prime minister and education minister of Malaysia among others.

'Wrangling' Over Portfolios

BK2002100889 Hong Kong AFP in English 0944 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Rawalpindi, Pakistan, Feb 20 (AFP)—Afghan resistance groups were wrangling over the allocation of key portfolios in an interim rebel government, delaying the start of a rebel assembly here Monday, several sources said.

Some of the 440 members at the assembly began walking out when the names of several cabinet members in the government were presented by resistance leaders, without assigned portfolios, the sources said. The names were announced in a block and a set of ministries was presented separately, but without any indication as to who would fill which ministry, angering shura delegates.

Other resistance sources have said the shura approved 15 cabinet names on Sunday.

The dispute centers on the allocation of the Defense, Foreign and Interior Ministries. Leaders of the seven Pakistan-based resistance groups were meeting monday to iron out differences, sources said.

Members of the four Islamic fundamentalist groups said that two of the three moderate groups had made their participation in the government conditional on receiving the three key portfolios.

The shura cancelled its morning session and was expected to meet in the afternoon, resistance sources said.

Moderate resistance leader Pir Sayyed Ahmad Gaylani continued to oppose the nomination of fundamentalist Ahmad Shah as head of the government, his party said. But observers say Mr. Gaylani is increasingly isolated inside the Pakistan-based seven resistance alliance in his opposition to Mr. Shah.

A member of the Islamic fundamentalist Hezb-e Eslami group led by Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, considered the most radical group in the alliance, said Mr. Gaylani had privately approved Mr. Shah's nomination and would not oppose it.

Some sources said field commanders who had been fighting combined Soviet and Kabul forces for the past nine years, also opposed Mr. Shah's appointment. They said renowned field commander Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, known as the "Lion of Panjsher," was among them.

But a spokesman for the Jamiyat-e Eslami faction to which Mr. Mas'ud belongs said he took his orders from the group's leader, Burhanuddin Rabbani, a member of the coalition of the four fundamentalist groups.

"Mas'ud is busy with his own military activities and if he gives any advice he will give it to Professor Rabbani," said the spokesman.

A member of Mr. Gaylani's National Islamic Front of Afghanistan (NIFA) said Mr. Rabbani had agreed to go along with Mr. Shah's nomination because he did not enjoy support as "frankly speaking he is a Farsi-speaking Tajik," a minority inside Afghanistan.

One moderate, Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi, has agreed to be head of state in a Shah government, and the third moderate, Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, agreed to step down in Mr. Muhammadi's favor.

Moderate sources have complained that the Pakistani Secret Service has applied pressure on them to go along with the four fundamentalist groups.

The resistance says the interim government would take over in Afghanistan once the Moscow-backed government in Kabul falls.

Resistance sources said that fundamentalist leader Muhammad Yunis Khalis refused to surrender the defense portfolio, which his group held in a previous resistance government.

Fundamentalists opposed the presentation of a separate Ministry of Female Education, saying women did not need to go to school, moderate sources said.

A 15-member committee was created Sunday to resolve the dispute.

Shura delegates rushed out Sunday when they heard a gun shot outside the hajj complex, where the assembly is being held, the independent newspaper THE MUSLIM reported Monday. About 100 mujahidin rebels guarding the complex with Kalashnikov rifles took up positions against a possible attack, but they later found out the gun had been fired by a Pakistani police constable who killed his superior for personal reasons, said the daily.

Ahmad Shah Appointment Opposed

BK2002160289 Hong Kong AFP in English 1542 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Rawalpindi, Pakistan, Feb 20 (AFP)—Afghan resistance leaders Monday set up a commission to decide on the fate of controversial proposed Prime Minister Ahmad Shah following increasing opposition to his appointment, several sources said.

Afghan rebel field commander Ahmad Shah Mas'ud sent a message to his group in the Pakistan-based resistance alliance, Jamiyat-e Eslami, saying he rejected Mr. Shah, several sources said.

Mr. Mas'ud's family confirmed to AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE that the commander, known as "the Lion of Panjsher," had said in a message that he rejected an interim rebel government led by Mr. Shah. Mr. Mas'ud said, however, that he did not reject the assembly, or shura, which has asked Mr. Shah to form a government.

The commission has been empowered by all seven alliance leaders to suggest whatever changes it deems necessary "to maintain unity" in rebel ranks, said resistance sources.

A participant said that 70 religious leaders and commanders in the shura, 10 from each party, had pressed for creating the commission after disagreements over portfolios resulted in the cancellation of Monday's morning session.

They convinced the seven leaders and obtained a written pledge that its decision would be acceptable to them, he said.

The alliance gave full authorisation to the commission and the decision to form the group was conveyed to the shura at a brief session Monday, he said.

The commission, which will begin work immediately, will not only allot portfolios but can also review the appointment of the prime minister, the sources said, describing the appointing of the group as a breakthrough.

The groups had wrangled over the allocation of key portfolios in the interim government earlier Monday, delaying the start of a rebel assembly here, the sources said.

Some of the 440 members at the assembly staged a walkout when the names of several cabinet members in the government were presented by resistance leaders, without assigned portfolios, the sources said. The names were announced in a block and a set of ministries was presented separately, but without any indication as to who would fill which ministry, angering shura delegates.

Other resistance sources have said the shura approved 15 cabinet names on Sunday.

Moderate resistance leader Pir Sayyed Ahmad Gaylani continues to oppose the nomination of fundamentalist Ahmad Shah as head of the government, his party says.

Moderate sources have complained that the Pakistani Secret Service has applied pressure on them to go along with the fundamentalists.

The resistance says the interim government would take over in Afghanistan once the Moscow-backed government in Kabul fell.

Mr. Mas'ud already opposed Mr. Shah's nomination as prime minister last year in a different mujahidin government.

Some sources said field commanders who had been fighting combined Soviet and Kabul forces during past nine years also opposed Mr. Shah's appointment.

But a spokesman for the Jamiyat-e Eslami faction, to which Mas'ud belongs, said he took his orders from the group's leader, Burhanuddin Rabbani, a member of the coalition of the four fundamentalist groups. "Mas'ud is busy with his own military activities and if he gives any advice he will give it to Professor Rabbani," said the spokesman.

A member of the National Islamic Front of Afghanistan (NIFA) said Mr. Rabbani had agreed to go along with the Shah nomination because he did not enjoy support as "frankly speaking he is a Farsi-speaking Tajik," a minority inside Afghanistan.

70-Member Committee Formed

BK2002153389 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] At its session in Islamabad, the Afghan mujahidin shura set up a 70-member commission, which will devise a formula for setting up an interim government in Afghanistan. This commission, comprised of commanders, 'ulema, and other distinguished leaders, will prepare a list of ministers and will assign their portfolios. This commission will submit the complete list at the full session of the shura at the earliest possible opportunity.

'Opposition' Groups Clash in 3 Provinces

LD1702230989 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Bloody clashes have been reported from various parts of the country among the armed opposition groups. Internal disagreement among them continue.

As a result of heavy clashes in Takhar Province between groups attached to the Gulbuddin and Rabbani extremist groups, 97 members of the Rabbani extremist group were killed, 60 injured, and 28 captured by the Gulbuddin extremist group. The extremist group of Gulbuddin captured 2 guns, 6 mortars, 6 rocket launchers, 1 DShK, 3 heavy machineguns, 129 Chinese Kalashnikovs and light machineguns, 600 shells, and 2 communication systems. A number of members of the Gulbuddin extremist group were injured.

According to another report, armed bloody clashes took place today in the village of (Kachor), Alingar District, Nangarhar Province between Gulbuddin and Mawlawa Muhammad Nabi groups. In the course of these clashes, (Karim) and (Sakhi), two ringleaders of the Mawlawi Muhammad Nabi group were killed, and a member of the Gulbuddin group was badly wounded. Clashes between these hostile groups are continuing in the village of (Kachor).

Disagreement among the extremists groups has worsened in Ghazni Province, particularly among the Gulbuddin and Gaylani groups. The groups planted mines along paths used by the other, causing the deaths of members of the other group. (Badam Gol) and (Esma'el), two armed extremists, were killed by mines in the province.

Mujahidin Reportedly Laying Seige to Jalalabad

BK1802161689 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say that the mujahidin have laid a complete siege around the Kabul administration's military headquarters in Jalalabad city in the eastern province of Nangarhar. Mujahidin, after consolidating their positions at Sorkh Rud in the southwest and at (Besud) in the north, have reached close to the headquarters. AGENCY AFGHAN PRESS reports that the mujahidin are awaiting orders to launch a decisive attack on the headquarters.

Mujahidin captured five security posts around Baghram airbase in Parvan Province, which were recently vacated by Soviet forces. The Kabul forces stationed there fled shortly before the attack, leaving behind arms and ammunition. The mujahidin destroyed two more security posts in the region and either killed or wounded 14 Kabul forces and captured 8 others. The mujahidin have launched successful operations in Baghlan, Paktia, Qandahar, Faryab, Takhar, Helmand, and Herat regions. Correspondents say it has been noted that after the Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Kabul forces either run away or defect to the mujahidin whenever they are attacked.

Kabul Radio Says Situation in Herat 'Normal'

LD1802221988 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1730 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] The units and subunits of the Armed Forces in Herat Province are completely in control of the situation and have inflicted crushing blows on the warmongering extremists in the past 3 months by carrying out fierce combat operations.

The BAKHTAR military correspondent reported the following from Herat city:

The infantry forces in Herat, who enjoy high combat preparedness and are fully supported by the people, in cooperation with other forces, have recently accomplished their duties successfully as a result of which 200 warmongering extremists were killed and a number of their hideouts were destroyed.

After the withdrawal of the Soviet military units from Herat Province, the units of the Armed Forces in this province have been independently accomplishing their duties and have established a number of security posts in this province to restore peace and security.

The report adds that at present the situation is normal in Herat Province and there are sufficient quantities of commodities needed by the people in Herat city.

Tarin Kowt, Barkah Reportedly Captured

BK1902153589 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] In Afghanistan, where a state of emergency is in force, the head of the Kabul regime has ordered all members of his ruling party to join the Army. Additional troops have been deployed on the streets of the capital and armored personnel are stationed at several intersections.

The coalition government has also been reshuffled and the ministers not belonging to the ruling party have been sacked.

Meanwhile, the Afghan mujahidin have captured Tarin Kowt, the headquarters of Oruzgan Province in the central part of the country. They attacked this headquarters with rockets and small artillery pieces on 15 February. With the capture of Tarin Kowt, the entire province of Oruzgan has now been liberated.

According to another report, the mujahidin have also captured the the subdivisional headquarters of Barkah, east of Baghlan city.

Mujahidin Destroy 15 Kabul Regime Posts

BK2102102389 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] In Afghanistan, mujahidin are reported to have destroyed 15 Kabul regime posts along the Kabul-Jalalabad highway and closed it to traffic. They are also reported to have captured 15 Kabul regime troops at (Dabli) base and (Auli Istahkam) base on the highway. Eight tanks were damaged and about 25 military vehicles destroyed during the operations.

In Baghlan Province, the mujahidin are reported to have shot down a helicopter in the (Bajwah) area. Agency reports say they captured a large number of troops along with 155 light weapons.

In another operation in (Chisht Sharif) District in Herat Province, at least seven Kabul troops were killed and a number of military vehicles destroyed.

India

Vorontsov Pays Visit, Warns Pakistan, U.S.

BK1702141389 Hong Kong AFP in English 1356 GMT 17 Feb 89

[By Pratap Chakravarty]

[Text] New Delhi, Feb 17 (AFP)—Yuliy Vorontsov, the chief Soviet negotiator on Afghanistan, warned here Friday that Moscow would not remain indifferent to threats to Afghanistan's independence or to a bloodbath in the country.

"We entered Afghanistan to help stop a war and see return of peace. We will not be indifferent to a bloodbath or any threat to Afghanistan's sovereignty and independence," he said at a press conference at a Soviet complex here.

"Those who are planning this should know," he said, but refused to say what measures Moscow might take in the event of a major offensive by Afghan rebels or whether it could include sending troops back to Afghanistan.

The warning from Mr Vorontsov came two days after the completion of the Soviet pullout from Afghanistan and at the end of his two-day surprise visit to New Delhi.

Mr Vorontsov, a deputy foreign minister and the Soviet ambassador to Kabul, held talks here with Premier Rajiv Gandhi, Foreign Minister Narasimha Rao and Foreign Secretary S.K. Singh. He refused to reveal details of the talks.

But the Soviet diplomat, who said he was here on orders from President Mikhail Gorbachev, clearly hinted that his talks focused on humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and reports of Islamabad massing troops along Afghanistan's eastern borders.

"We have true facts that Pakistani artillery pieces and military equipment manned by Pakistani personnel are situated on (the eastern Afghan city of) Jalalabad's borders.... It is a worrisome situation," he said, adding that his discussions were focused mainly on these issues.

"They (Pakistan) have not used them (the artillery pieces) and when they do, you will see our reaction," Mr Vorontsov said.

"We have also taken necessary measures so that Kabul can defend itself. We have equipped them with most destructive weapons and some of them have not been used yet," he added.

The Soviet Union began supplying surface-to-surface scud missiles to the regime of President Najibullah when the countdown began in October for the Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Mr. Vorontsov also denounced the United States for supplying arms to the Pakistan-based mujahidin. "The United States is going to support continuous war and bloodshed in Afghanistan and that is wrong ... That is a mistake," he said. "It is important to avoid a situation of tremendous bloodbath."

The visit here by Mr. Voronstov, who has been involved in intense shuttle diplomacy in an effort to forge a coalition government in Afghanistan, was also aimed at sounding out India's stand on a coalition, observers here said.

He accused the West of launching false propaganda that the Najibullah government would crumble, calling it "wishful thinking" and saying that "everbody should be realistic."

"The Kabul regime is militarily and politically strong... Kabul is prepared to negotiate and compromise," he said, adding that it was a "real possibility to arrange for a new broad-based government where all political forces can participate."

"Soviet forces are out so no other forces should be in ... it is important," he said in an obvious reference to Pakistan.

Members of the Pakistan-based mujahidin alliance have rejected Mr. Najibullah's proposals to join a coalition and have said he and the ruling communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) should step down.

"It (the PDPA) cannot be denied a position (in an interim setup) as it is a serious political and military force," Mr. Vorontsov said, adding that during his talks with the rebels he had insisted on PDPA representation.

He said that the eight-party Iran-based mujahidin alliance was more open to negotiations than the Pakistan-based mujahidin.

"Some clandestine dialogue exists between groups and Kabul over questions of national reconciliation ... the discussions are very serious and we hope that would develop for a broad-based government," Mr. Vorontsov said.

He was referring to statements by Mr. Najibullah last week that Kabul had started its own direct negotiations independently of Moscow with unspecified rebel groups.

Mr. Gandhi's government has stressed the need for a peaceful solution to the Afghan conflict and observers here speculate that India may take a more active international stance on the issue as a result of the visit.

"We are fully ready to resume contacts with opposition leaders to discuss real things," Mr. Vorontsov said referring to the mujahidin and to exiled Afghan King Zahir Shah.

"We are interested in all avenues in ending the bloodshed in Afghanistan."

Delhi Reports Warnings

BK1702162789 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] The Soviet Union today warned Pakistan that it would not be indifferent to any outside move threatening the sovereignty and independence of Afghanistan. Addressing a news conference in New Delhi today, the first Soviet deputy foreign minister, Mr Yuliy Vorontsov, said his country would also not be a silent spectator to any ploy to plunge Afghanistan in a bloodbath. He reiterated his country's claim that Pakistan had deployed and positioned its troops in the Jalalabad area. Even Pakistani artillery had been brought along, but it had not been used yet.

Asked how serious was the situation in Jalalabad, Mr Vorontsov said government forces are in control of the city, which is surrounded by the rebels. He said if it is attacked, we shall consult the Afghan Government, the world community, and the UN secretary general. Mr Vorontsov said the Soviet troops are out of Afghanistan, but made it clear that no other forces should be in. This is necessary if the Afghan people are to settle their own problem through peaceful means.

Answering a query on the U.S. President's statement that the country would continue to supply arms to the rebels, Mr Vorontsov said this means that the United States is in favor of a military solution in Afghanistan. He said Washington has failed to see the change that has taken place in Afghanistan. It will be a big mistake, he said.

Commenting on the situation in Afghanistan, Mr Vorontsov expressed confidence that the Najib government would be able to defend itself as it has one of the most modern armed forces. He said the Soviet Union has appealed to the UN secretary general to take all necessary steps to ensure that peace returns to Afghanistan.

Mr Vorontsov, who is Soviet Union's chief negotiator on Afghanistan, said that at the behest of Soviet President Mr Gorbachev he held consultations with the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, on the new situation that had emerged in Afghanistan, a country close to both the Soviet Union and India. He claimed that some dialogue is on secretly with some groups of rebels and they are discussing the question of national reconciliation. Representatives of 15 opposition political parties are also trying to create a broad-based in Afghanistan, he added.

Mr Vorontsov appealed to the world community to send humanitarian aid to Afghanistan to help in its national reconstruction.

Mobs Protest in Kashmir Against Rushdie Book

BK1702160289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] The police burst teargas shells to disperse violent mobs in some parts of Srinagar city in Jammu and Kashmir today. There were protests in the city against Salman Rushdie's book, "The Satanic Verses," which is already banned by the government. Two children received burn injuries when a crude device exploded in Kailashpura area. Shops remained closed in Srinagar city today. The divisional commissioner told AIR correspondent that the bundh [strike] was partial in other towns and the situation is well under control.

Protest demonstrations have also been reported from Karachi in Pakistan and the Bangladesh capital Dhaka. The book is banned in both the countries.

40 Injured in Protest

BK1802032289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] In Srinagar, 40 people, including some policemen, were injured in yesterday's clashes in the downtown area and Baramula during protests against Salman Rushdie's controversial book, "The Satanic Verses." The book has already been banned by the government. In Srinagar city, shops remained closed during the bundh [strike] but public transport, government offices, and banks functioned normally.

Assam 'Extremists' Explode Bomb; Strike Continues

BK1802090989 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Train services between Assam and rest of the country continued to remain suspended after yesterday's derailment of an engine near Danktal on the Bongaigaon-Kokrajhar section. Some miscreants had removed 6 meters of railway tracks, causing the derailment. Efforts are on to repair the track.

Normal life in Kokrajhar District and Udalguri Subdivision is paralyzed as the All Bodo Students Union's call for 120-hour bundh [strike] entered its 3d day today. Offices, educational institutions, and shops are closed. The agitators are demanding a separate state. The army is standing by to assist the civil administration. Bodo extremists exploded a bomb in front of the vehicle of the deputy commissioner and the superintendent of police. They escaped unhurt. In another incident, the extremists set fire to four road bridges in Udalguri Subdivision last night.

Gandhi Congratulates Premadasa on Election Win

BK1802050989 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0435 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has congratulated President Ranasinghe Premadasa for the decisive victory of his party in the parliamentary polls in Sri Lanka. In a message to the president, the prime minister wished Mr Premadasa success in his endeavors.

Iran

Khamene'i Delivers Friday Prayers Sermons

LD1702211989 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1530 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Friday prayers sermon delivered by President Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i at Tehran University on 17 February—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Today has various meanings and the vast gathering of the people to express their hatred and disgust about the evil arrogant conspiracy has given special character to today and our great prayers gathering.

First, I express congratulations to our dear brothers and sisters who are holding prayers on the occasion the anniversary of birth of Imam Muhammad Taqi—peace be upon him. I hope you will learn the lesson of life, struggle, and resistance from the lifestyle of that great innocent man. Also, these days are reminders of the great heroic deeds of the people of Tabriz on 18 February 1978, the 40th day of the martyrdom of the people of Qom, when those brave, honorable, pious, self-sacrificing, pure and earnest people started the series of 40th day demonstrations, broke the deadlock; and founded the endless auspicious series of events which resulted in the victory of the revolution. All our people must honor this day, must thank the people of Tabriz, and pray for God's blessings for the dear martyrs of that day and those people who have demonstrated their sincere loyalty over the past 10 years.

The important issue of the day is the cultural conspiracy of world arrogance, about which I will say a few words. Then there is the issue of Afghanistan, which is one of the outstanding points in our contemporary history, and then the issue of Lebanon.

World arrogance has utilized every means to destroy the revolution and its vestiges. Political, military, economic, cultural propoganda, and all other means at the disposal of arrogance have been used. The method given most attention right from the start, which was considered more effective for arrogance, is the cultural method. W Muslims should be as wary of the enemy's cultural fro as we are of the enemy's military front. As the enemy attack on our borders brings us into action, the enemy attack on our cultural borders should evoke a reactio from us at least to the same degree, if not more. I gave lengthy address about this during Friday prayers 1 or years ago. We should talk to the people about this issu at greater length so as to evoke a reaction and awarene in the face of the enemy's cultural attacks, which is a extremely important and dangerous issue.

However, sometimes arrogance makes a mistake an when resorting to a course of action, miscalculates an does something which backfires. An example of this ca be seen in the book "The Satanic Verses," which is n doubt one of the verses of the Great Satan, or one of h surrogates, where a member of the British Royal Literar Society was forced to write a book. The book is of cour fiction, a novel; it is a story. The author implies that th story takes place in modern times. In the story, and i the description of its heroes and characters, he relat some of the issues and incidents pertaining to the gre prophet and the early days of Islam, but with very ug and offensive interpretations—which are no doubt wo thy of a base and impolite person like the author of th book—and he insults the great prophet and some of h close allies, such as Salman, Balal and his wives.

A reminder of what the author said makes one's bloo boil. They have created such a filthy thing and put it o the media market and advertised it. such a book does n stand a big chance of becoming a best-seller. Thousan of books are written in the world every year. There a good stories written by famous and talented authors wi artistic value. Many years pass before these books a translated into another language, or become wide known in the countries in which they were writte However, by spending money, advertising, using th media and their mercenary newspapers and magazine they hurriedly and prematurely published the boo They publicized its title and the name of its publishe they printed the photograph of its author first in th British and then the U.S. press. A few weeks ago, I saw with my own eyes in two U.S. magazines. He too advantage of the situation, gave interviews, and adopt an impartial and cool attitude, while at the same tin repeating his insults and filth-spreading in other form

In addition to being a sin in the eyes of the law, religio and humanity, this dirtying of literature and arts was ugly deed. It would be fitting for the world's authors ar those involved in the literary field to banish this ugl cursed, and evil person, because, for a person to taint th shining period of history—which is admired by 1 billi human beings in the world—to receive some money f it, or to become famous, is one of the basest deeds tha writer can commit.

There is no doubt about the involvement of the polici prevailing in the arrogant world, particularly in th United States and Britain. Most of the world's radio newspapers, televisions, and news agencies belong to the Zionists, as you know. They advertised the book and made it famous. The important point in the book is that the author has put his finger on a matter which, first of all, concerns all Muslims, and second, involves the feelings and beliefs of the Muslims: the great prophet. [corwd chants]

As you know, the Muslims of the world have many beliefs, but the feelings, admiration, and adoration of the Muslims, from any sect, in any part of the world, whether they are devout or not, are concentrated around the person of the great prophet. [crowd chants] The hearts of the Muslims of the world are filled with the love of this great man, and his seat, house, and city have become the Mecca of the hearts, hopes, and feelings of 1 billion Muslims.

This base and evil person has put his finger right on this point. He has not merely criticized or derided some Islamic beliefs; he has put his pen right on the shining face of His Excellency Muhammad. This is the fundamental point which upsets all Muslims. No one who is a Muslim could be indifferent to this. In my opinion that is not possible.

From the standpoint of world legal standards this matter is perfectly clear. Respecting the feelings, thoughts, and beliefs of human beings is one of the most primary and accepted principles of human rights. How could a person or a group of people believe in human rights and the human rights charter, while at the same time allow the beliefs, thoughts, and feelings of a large number of people to be insulted. That is not possible. I am surprised at some of the mass media in the world. Of course the mass media reports one side of the issue; it cannot become a mediator, such as the radios affiliated with world powers. The media has been saying: Why have you shown such a reaction toward an author for expressing his views? Why has the imam issued such a decree about this person? Well, these gentlemen want to consider a person's rights. What surprises me—of course, not the world media, but whoever believes it—is that they acknowledge freedom of ideas, saying we must respect the rights of this author and let him express his opinion. They have respect for one person, but no respect for the ideals, feelings, and beliefs of 1 billion human beings who have been insulted and ridiculed by this one person.

I am also surprised at the policy of those who place themselves behind this issue and disgrace themselves. We object to Britain's policy. The British Government must answer to us, the peqple of Iran and all the Muslims, for permitting a person from that country—although he is of Indian origin, he is a British subject—and a member of an official body, that is the Royal Literary Society, this filthy lackey, to do such a thing. The British statesmen and the British Government must explain. [crowd chants]

It is surprising that they are behaving as if we owe them something, asking why we have commented about a writer. Why are they pretending to be stupid? Perhaps they really are. I am surprised at Britain's policy. In the past, in this country as well those countries under their domination, even if the British had nothing in common with the people of those countries or their beliefs, they at least pretended that they respected their beliefs.

This was a recognized characteristic of the policies of the British. Today, contrary to their age-old colonialistic policy, the British Government is behaving like idiots by defending such a filthy and evil person and such an indefensible deed. This demand by the British Government is totally unjustified and wrong. They object to the fact that the imam has expressed his views. Why should the imam not express his views? The imam is the leader of Muslim ummahs. He is not just the leader of the people of Iran; the world Muslims believe in the imam in their hearts. As the leader of the Islamic ummah he was right to defend the rights of the Islamic ummah. [crowd chants]

Why should the imam not express an opinion which is the opinion of hundreds of millions of Muslims? Is expression of opinion not permissible? Is it not the right of every individual to express his opinion? The imam also expressed his opinion. What do you have to say? They say that the views of the imam are infuential and they will come and kill this person. Of course, they are influential. We know this too. The imam be praised for having issued this decree and for making that judgment. We should kiss the imam's hands for this. Of course, the views of the imam are influential. This is the meaning of being the leader of the Muslims. You were wrong to have allowed someone within your government's jurisdiction to commit such an insolent act, about an issue of such importance that would force the leader of the Muslim nations [as heard] to be outraged, to issue a decree, and make the Muslims carry out his decree. They will certainly carry out his decree. [shouts of "God is great," "Death to America," "Death to the Soviet Union," and "Death to England"]

Of course, all the people of the world, whether they are followers and devotees of the imam of the ummah or his enemies, know that the decree of the imam is an influential decree. Of course, I should thank the 5 June Foundation [a charitable foundation set up after the revolution to help the families of the martyrs and poor people] and the people of Rafsanjan who also set aside some money for this purpose. I say that there is really no need for setting aside any money. When the people of the world and the followers of the imam of the ummah do this, they certainly will not do it for the sake of money. They will do it because of their faith. They will do it because of their love for the prophet of God, they will do it because of their love for this son of the prophet, who is sitting here and is guiding the Islamic ummah. This is why they will do it, not because of any prize money or any reward. Naturally, the brothers who have set aside this prize money and this reward have certainly done this because of their love for the imam and their fondness for this work, as they wish it to be carried out as soon as possible.

I say that this should be done under conditions whereby it can be implemented. They have set up a police cordon around the miserable wretch so that no one can reach him. Undoubtedly, when the opportunity arises muslims—Muslims we do not know, Muslims who may never be introduced to the people of the world, or to the Muslims of the world, or to the Iranian people—will carry out their duty. If they can do it today, they will do it today. If not, they will do it tomorrow. If not, they will do it next year. If not, they will do it after a longer time. It will never stop. The imam's decree will never be left undone. This wretched man who placed himself in this predicament has no option but death. He has confronted 1 billion of the world's Muslims. He has made himself the target of the imam's binding decree. Without a doubt, revolutionary execution will be carried out on him.

He may repent; he may write books; he may say that he is sorry; he may ask for forgiveness from all Muslims, from the imam of the ummah; he may say that he was mistaken, and that the book was not his [as heard]. In that case, the people might forgive him. But, in that case, Americans themselves will kill him. They will not allow such a person to remain alive, to reveal their policies, and to bring disgrace upon them.

In any case, the fate of this man is death, a death full of fear and anxiety. Each day, even now, while he is still alive, he dies and comes back to life 10 times. The imam's binding decree will be carried out. The United States and Britain, arrogant governments and plotters, should all know that the time when Muslims would endure insults with heartfelt pain and in silence, and would say nothing, has long passed. [crowd chants slogans]

There are those who may act without caution, those who may indulge in stupidity and engage in such actions: It has now been made clear that they will lose their lives, and the governments which support them will lose face. This is something which is very clear. The Muslims of the world, especially Muslim youths, have been aroused as the result of the Islamic revolution of the Iranian nation. They are alive. You saw what happened in Pakistan, in India, and in some other countries. In some countries I am sure that were it not for the corrupt heads of government and their preventing the Islamic people from expressing their feelings, without doubt this movement would have appeared throughout the Islamic world, and the feelings of the Muslims would have manifested themselves.

I wish to point out another matter. I hear some individuals have gone toward some embassies. I announce to you here, as a government official, and as the Friday imam and a member of clergy: Do not go near any embassies. You should know that if you are against

British or U.S. policy, or any other policy, it is not correct for a number of people to climb embassy walls without control or to go near to any embassies. I stress to you that this work is definitely against the interests of Islam and Muslims, and against the interest of the Islamic Republic.

The people wish to take part in marches, in demonstrations; they reveal their feelings, their sincere, correct, and logical feelings. There is no doubt about this. They may go into the streets to express their views, but they should not get close to any embassies. The enemy might want to do this: Some infiltrating enemy agents may join a group and go near an embassy, may climb its walls. They may, let us say, throw a fireball, or they may break or destroy something. You should know that such a thing is wrong; it is an offence; it is against Iran's interests. If someone does this knowingly, it is treason. [crowd chants]

With respect to the issue of Afghanistan, I would first like to congratulate the Afghan nation, as well as our nation and all the other Muslim nations, on this great stage toward victory. The foreign forces, who entered Afghanistan 9 years ago, singing songs in high spirits while envisioning fantasies of their future in Afghanistan, have now fortunately left that country. This success was achieved by the Afghan nation alone; no one ever offers a nation's rights to them on a silver tray. It was this nation, which through its patience, resistance, struggle, war, and numerous problems—did you know how numerous their problems were?—managed to achieve such glory for themselves.

Second, we hope that the political leaders in Afghanistan, with the aid of full political growth and knowledge of the times, will form an all-embracing government. They should not leave a group, a class, or a party out of the government. All Afghan groups, the religions within Afghanistan, the Islamic faiths, all the well-known political and military forces played a part in this great victory. A government should be all-embracing. I should stress that we as the Islamic Republic denounce any kind of tribal warfare or domestic strife in Afghanistan. We prohibit it and condemn it. A Shi'ite-Sunni war, war between factions, war between parties are all considered treachery against the Afghan people, and we do not support such action whatsoever. We condemn it. For those who are listening to us, I prohibit them from such actions and if, God forbid such action occurs, we will regard it as a despicable act. [crowd chants]

Our Afghan brothers should take heed against U.S. brokerage in Afghanistan during this sensitive stage. They should not allow foreign hands to come and reap the fruit of their toilsome struggles. Some individuals, some dignitaries, and perhaps some governments, may try to act as brokers for the United States, and the West. The Afghan people should not bow to such things and they will not do so either. These are the same people who have throughout history driven the British out of their country. The Afghan fighters killed all the British occupants, their soldiers and their Armed Forces. They only let one person live, and that was a doctor, whom they sent to the queen of England with a message saying your place is not in Afghanistan. This is the nature of the Afghans. You saw how through their resistance they forced their northern neighbors out, to make sure that other great global powers would not repeat the same mistake, and establish another kind of domination over this nation.

Now with regard to the issue of Lebanon. The principal point in my discussion is to express my gratitude. On the same occasion of Friday prayers, we conveyed a message to our brothers in Lebanon—both the Amal Movement and the Hizballah brothers—and urged them to wash their hands of the internal struggle and fratricide. A number of our brothers made great efforts which were fortunately welcomed by those brothers and were well recieved. I am happy that, praised be to God, this very sad domestic warfare has ended. Our brothers are now working in line with each other. I thank the leaders of both factions, as well as their officials and heads—both Amal and Hizballah—for having displayed such wisdom and progress, but they should be careful.

I recall the deceased martyr Chamran, who lived in Lebanon for a time, telling me about Lebanese internal warfare. He told me of how they would, after tremendous efforts, end the internal warfares after weeks and months, and call a cease-fire, when suddenly in the middle of the night a bullet would be fired from a gun, hitting someone who belonged to a different group, and the war would resume the next day. We finally discovered that there are some who oppose peace in Lebanon. I am telling you this as it was related to me by an expert in history, the deceased martyr Chamran. Now that peace has been made between our Amal and Hizballah brothers, do not allow anyone to create friction between our brothers again through the use of explosives, assassination, kidnapping, or other repugnant actions. Their vigilance is indispensable. Peace should be guarded. Of course, the continuation of their revolutionary and anti-Zionistic actions should be among their principles of action.

Present in our great gathering today are various strata of people who have come to display their abhorrence toward global arrogance, particularly those from the cultural institutions. I would like to thank all the traders who closed their bazaars following the imam's religious edict.

Further on Threats to Rushdie, Envoys' Recall

Rushdie Apology Falls Short

LD1802132389 Tehran IRNA in English 1307 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] London, Feb. 18, IRNA—Muslim heretic Salman Rushdie has formally apologized for his slanderous book on Islam "The Satanic Verses".

In a statement issued Saturday, the Indian-born author said he recognises that Muslims in many parts of the world are "genuinely distressed" by his publication, which he describes as a "novel."

"I profoundly regret the distress the publication has occasioned to sincere followers of Islam," he said but made no indication of his repentence or that his slanderous book would be withdrawn.

Instead he only went on to say that the experience from his book has served to remind people that they live in a world of many faiths and that "we must all be conscious of the sensibilities of others."

Rushdie has been in hiding in Britain since leader of the Islamic revolution Imam Khomeyni issued a fatwah on his life last Tuesday. He had been under growing pressure to make a public repentence that his statement is seen falling well short of.

President 'Ali Khamene'i said yesterday that Muslims and the imam may forgive the writer if he made an apology.

"Of course, he may repent and say 'I made a blunder' and apologise to Muslims and the imam. Then it is possible that the people may pardon him," he said in his Friday prayers sermon.

A reward of about $6 million had been offered by an Iranian charity agency and private businesses for anyone who carried out the imam's fatwa.

The full text of Salman Rushdie's statement issued Saturday from his place in hiding in Britain:

"As the author of 'The Satanic Verses,' I recognise that Muslims in many parts of the world are genuinely distressed by the publication of my novel. I profoundly regret the distress the publication has occasioned to sincere followers of Islam. Living as we do in a world of many faiths, this experience has served to remind us that we must all be conscious of the sensibilities of others."

Khomeyni Rejects Apology

LD1902200989 Tehran IRNA in English 2004 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 19, IRNA—Imam Khomeyni declared Sunday that Salman Rushdie could not be forgiven "even if he repents."

"Even if Salman Rushdie repents and becomes the most pious man of time it is incumbent on every Muslim employ everything he's got, his life and wealth, to send him to hell," the leader of the Islamic revolution said in a statement.

The statement issued by the Imam's Office Sunday evening followed Rushdie's apology on Saturday for causing "profound distress" to Muslims for publishing his slanderous novel "The Satanic Verses" believed blasphemous by Muslims.

The statement said the imperialist mass media were falsely alleging that if the author repented his execution order would be lifted.

"This is denied, one hundred percent," the statement quoted the imam as saying.

The imam also confirmed that if a non-Muslim could carry out the fatwah [edict] against Rushdie more quickly than a Muslim, he would qualify for a reward.

In such a case "it is incumbent on Muslims to pay a reward or a fee in return for this action."

Last Wednesday the 15th of Khordad [5 June] Charity Foundation offered rials 200 million (nearly dlrs 3 mn) for any Iranian who carried out the order and dlrs 1 million for any foreigner.

The offer was increased by another rials 200 million by businessmen and people of Rafsanjan, the hometown of Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in Kerman Province.

The imam issued his first fatwah last Tuesday calling on Muslims to execute Rushdie so that "no one ever again would dare to insult the sanctities of Muslims."

Muslims the world over have especially been offended by passages in a dream sequence of the book which have been taken as a blatant affront against the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, his wives, as well as Prophet Abraham and several other holy Islamic figures.

Rushdie, born into a Muslim family in India and now a British national, said in a brief statement from his heavily guarded hiding place in Britain: "I profoundly regret the distress the publication has occasioned to sincere followers of Islam."

The apology received only limited coverage in the Iranian media Sunday with one daily saying that it fell short of repentance and that Rushdie had not made indication that he would withdraw the offensive book.

The following is the full text of the statement from the Imam's Office: In the name of the Most High. The imperialist foreign mass media are falsely alleging that the officials of the Islamic Republic have said that if the author of "The Satanic Verses" repents, the execution order against him would be abolished.

His excellency, Imam Khomeyni, may he live long, said: "This is denied, one hundred percent. Even if Salman Rushdie repents and becomes the most pious man of time, it is incumbent on every Muslim to employ everything he's got, his live and wealth, to send him to hell."

His excellency the imam added: "If a non-Muslim becomes aware of his (Rushdie's) whereabouts and has the ability to execute him quicker than Muslims, it is incumbent on Muslims to pay a reward or a fee in return for this action."

[Signed] Imam Khomeyni's Office

Larijani, UK Envoy Hold Talks

LD1702164189 Tehran IRNA in English 1635 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 17, IRNA—Referring to international standards of behavior to condemn Imam Khomeyni's fatwah [edict] for the execution of an author who blasphemed Islam was irrelevant because respect to beliefs of world Muslims had been ignored, Britain was told Friday.

"How can those who speak of international standards in foreign relations ignore the most basic principle of respect for the thoughts and sanctities of nations?" Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Larijani asked Britain's Charge d'Affaires Nicholas Browne.

Browne, in his second meeting with Foreign Ministry officials in 24 hours, handed a message from his Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe.

"The British Government respects all religions of the world, namely Islam," Browne said, according to the Foreign Ministry's Public Relations Office. He repeated Britain's assertion that the London government had no role in the publication of "The Satanic Verses" and did not intend to insult Muslims.

Larijani said no Western government had taken measures to stop Salman Rushdie's insulting book "The Satanic Verses". Western governments "must know that for Muslims defending their beliefs is more important that defending their lives, property or homeland."

The meeting took place Friday morning before President Khamene'i's Friday prayers sermon in which he demanded an explanation from Britain for allowing the book believed blasphemous by Muslims to be published. But the president also made a strong warning to protestors not go near Britain's Embassy or other embassies.

Indian-born Rushdie lives in England where he is currently in hiding under heavy police protection fearing assassinations attempts by Muslims.

UK Foreign Office on 'Rift'

LD1802085189 Tehran IRNA in English 0525 GMT 18 Feb 89

["More Hopeful Signs After Larijani Meeting With British Envoy"—IRNA headline]

[Text] London, Feb. 18, IRNA—The prospects of resolving the current rift between Britain and Iran look more hopeful following further clarification on Imam Khomeyni's fatwah on the life of British-based author Salman Rushdie, the Foreign Office spokesman said Friday.

He was referring to a meeting earlier in the day between Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs Mohammad Javad Larijani and British Charge d'Affaires Nicholas Browne in Tehran, which he took as a "quite significant" sign.

It was a "friendly but firm meeting," that went on a long time and where Larijani explained in "considerable detail" the whole background of the imam's fatwah and the distinction between it and a government statement, the spokesman told IRNA.

A misunderstanding about the fatwah, since it was issued on Tuesday, led to a growing rift between the two countries with Britain mistakenly interpreting the order on a Muslim apostate as an attack on its sovereignty and interference in its internal affairs.

Both officials made it "absolutely clear" that they preferred to have good relations, the spokesman said. Britain's position was that it "stood by last November's agreement," that demanded mutual respect in developing ties.

Another positive sign was seen from Browne receiving further assurances about the safety of the British Embassy and its staff and was said to be "very welcome."

The developing dispute led the Foreign Office to announce Thursday that it was temporarily halting its build-up of diplomats in Iran from its present level of 3 plus one staff. A further 13 diplomats had been designated to go to Tehran under November's agreement.

The Foreign Office confirmed that Browne did deliver a letter from Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe but was unable to talk about its contents.

It did mention the subject of detained British spy Roger Cooper also came up, although the quoted statement from Larijani that the case was with the prosecutor and there had been "no trial" disputed earlier reports and seemingly left some confusion.

The spokesman said the envoy did make the point about its anxiety over the case and requested that whenever he was subjected to the judicial process that the Embassy would like to be "officially informed."

Cooper, who has been in jail for over three years, has [been a] continuing matter of concern for the Foreign Office, but the spokesman felt that overall things tended to look "more hopeful" with prospects apparently better of resolving disputes diplomatically.

The meeting at the very least, he judged, "underlined the worth" of Britain still having a representative in Tehran.

Cooper Sentenced to 27 Years

TA1702172489 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Citing informed Tehran circles, our fellow strugglers have reported that at the height of the crisis that the Islamic Republic regime has created in its relations with Britain over the novel "The Satanic Verses," it put Roger Cooper on trial and sentenced him to 27 years in prison. Apparently, leaders of the Islamic Republic regime do not want to publicize the sham trial of Roger Cooper and the court's verdict against this British citizen.

EEC Recalls Envoys From Tehran

AU2002130989 Paris AFP in English 1302 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Brussels, Feb 20 (AFP)—The 12-nation European Economic Community (EEC) decided Monday to recall their ambassadors from Tehran for consultations and suspend high-level visits to Iran because of Iranian death threats against British author Salman Rushdie, diplomats said.

The measures will be announced officially later Monday, after a meeting here of EEC foreign ministers, they said.

The decision came after Britain said it would press its EEC partners for diplomatic support.

Daily Blames 'Zionist Lobby'

LD2102071389 Tehran IRNA in English 0710 GMT 21 Feb 89

["EEC Move a Rash One"—IRNA headline]

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA—The English Daily TEHRAN TIMES in an editorial today called the EEC move to summon envoys from Tehran as a "rash one."

According to the daily, the Zionist lobby has pushed EEC to confront Iran as "Israel does not want to see any improvement in Iran's ties to the West and the Persian Gulf nations."

The EEC decision came Monday after Imam Khomeyni reiterated that the "fatwah" on the killing of the author of "The Satanic Verses" was irreversible.

Referring to the forthcoming visit of Soviet foreign minister to Tehran and several other important Islamic countries aimed at expanding and consolidating ties with the world of Islam, the daily maintained that "the West's confrontation over a rightful cause is only to the benefit of the USSR."

Another English daily KEYHAN INTERNATIONAL, in its today's editorial, also on the same subject, underlined that "the religious edict remains in force" and that "it will be carried out."

On the EEC move and its preaches [word as received] on civilized world, the daily pointed out that "the nation of Iran which remained outside the so-called civilized world for ten long and hard years would prefer to remain outside as long as it is free to proclaim the command of God and implement it."

Envoys to EEC Recalled

LD2102095189 Tehran IRNA in English 0948 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA—Iran has recalled its ambassadors at the European Economic Community in response to the recalling of the EEC ambassadors from Tehran Monday [20 February] night.

A communique published by the Iranian Foreign Ministry here Tuesday said Imam Khomeyni's order for the punishment of the writer of "The Satanic Verses" is the consensus judgement of all Muslim leaders throughout the world.

It deplored the refusal of the European Community to condemn the book and criticized the community's support for a work which blasphemes Islam.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry said that respect for Islam and its values will continue to be an inviolable principle in relations between Iran and other countries.

The statement of the Iranian Foreign Ministry said the Iranian ambassadors at the European Community have been recalled for consultation.

On Monday night and shortly after the foreign ministers of the European Community in Brussels decided to recall their ambassadors from Iran, Prime Minister Musavi sharply criticized the decision describing it as a useless maneuver certain to harm the European Community rather than Iran.

Musavi said Iran is able to stand on its own unaided by any other country. He added it is the Western countries which need to win Iran's favor rather than the other way round, and assured that the Islamic Republic, unaided by any foreign power, will hold out relying solely on God and Islam.

The prime minister also deplored the silence of world writers who, he said, chose to remain silent when the U.S. invaded Grenada and toppled its constitutional government.

Musavi said as the West festers the air with hostile propaganda against Iran, the Muslim world will eventually feel the hostility of the United States and Britain and their allies with Islam.

He said the West would soon learn that their decision has been a blooper.

Musavi on EEC Decision

LD2102122989 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Our next news report concerns the prime minister's interview in connection with EEC's decision to call its ambassadors back from Tehran. In that interview Mr Musavi declared: We will show retaliatory action in the face of any move by the EEC in connection with the publication of the insulting book of "The Satanic Verses." He stressed: Undoubtedly, the imam of the ummah's decree will be implemented, and the person who has become a puppet in the hands of Zionism and has moved against Islam by shamelessly attacking Islam and its prophet will be punished. The opinion of all religious leaders of various Islamic sects is clear in this regard. There is no difference among the Muslims in considering punishment for this person who has ridiculed the prophet of Islam.

Mr Musavi said: We are facing a well-organized conspiracy against Islam. After Western arrogance's failure to defeat Islam in head-to-head combat, it has now devised this filthy conspiracy. He added: The punishment of the author, who has become an instrument for launching attacks and conspiracies against more than 1 billion humans in the world, has nothing to do with freedom of expression. He said: Islam is not frightened of debate, discussion, or critical appraisal. This has been proved by Islam's progress, which has been achieved despite the publication of tens of books all over the world in recent centuries that have usually contained much bias and distortion. However, this book is neither a critical appraisal nor a piece of historical research. It is merely a mental and sexual disease [bimari-e jensi], which has crystallized in the form of a general insult to the prophet of Islam.

Mr Musavi said: We are surprised at those writers who claim to be supporting freedom in the world and who are presently staunchly supporting the publication of that filthy book. Why was it that these writers did not shout in protest when tens of U.S. ships were threatening the freedom of our nation, or when Grenada was invaded and the legal government of that country was toppled by the United States? Why did they remain silent in the face of the crimes committed by Israeli forces who murdered Palestinian people only yesterday?

The prime minister stressed: The Western attempts aimed at creating adverse climate will cause the Muslims of the world to fully realize the anti-Islam spirit of the United States and England and their allies. Muslims all over the world must realize their real freedom lies in their independence from global Zionism and arrogant powers. He stated: The decree of the imam of the ummah will alert the Muslim nations of the world, while it will reveal the true nature of those who claim to be the real defenders of Islam.

In connection with the EEC decision on recalling its envoys from Tehran, he said: The ploys of the West against our country will not produce any results. During the last 10 years we have become accustomed to defending ourselves without extending the hand of assistance toward anyone. Similarly today, for the purpose of defending the honor of Islam and its prophet, we have the power to manage the affairs of our country. It is in fact the West that is running after us. We are proud that we do not have to beg anybody in the world for affection [mohebbat]. We are certain that the Islamic Republic of Iran will emerge from this struggle more proud and with an even greater degree of influence in the world.

In conclusion, Mr Musavi, in connection with the question of whether Iran will retaliate, said: Naturally, that act will not go unanswered, and a precise act of retaliation will be carried out. They will soon realize that once again they have committed a great mistake.

Further on Recall of Envoys

LD2102121389 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement today in which it declared that all Iranian ambassadors and envoys in EEC countries—in a reciprocal action to protest the decision taken by the EEC foreign ministers in their recent meeting—have been called back to Tehran.

The statement says: The conspiratory ploys of the enemies of Islam, the latest of which is the publication of the blasphemous book "The Satanic Verses," and the enthusiastic movement of world Muslims aimed at defending Islam, the Koran, the prophet, and the edict of his excellency the imam—which is the expression of a divine decree approved by all sects and branches of Islam—is a warning to the enemies of Islam that now Muslims are more aware and insults against the prophet and Islam will not be tolerated.

Iran, while emphasizing the necessity to respect the sacred beliefs and values of all divine religions and stressing the religious duty of all Muslims to defend Islam and combat any insult to the values of the illuminating religion of Islam, protests the decision made at the recent EEC foreign ministers' meeting. The EEC meeting has not distanced itself from the publication of the insulting book "The Satanic Verses" and has remained indifferent in the face of the insult made against the world's billion Muslims. Furthermore, the EEC has adopted decisions aimed at lending support to that insulting act. In retaliation, the ambassadors and the heads of diplomatic missions of Iran in EEC countries have been recalled to Tehran for consultations.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs once again emphasizes that insults to the sacred beliefs of Islam will not be tolerated by Iran or by the world's Muslim nations. Respect for Islam and Islamic values is a part of the principle of mutual respect determining the framework of the relations between Islamic countries with other governments.

Majlis Speaker on EC's 'Mistake'

LD2102104989 Tehran IRNA in English 1030 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA—Majlis Speaker Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said the decision by 12 West European states to impose a diplomatic boycot on Iran "is a big mistake". It proved that "The Satanic Verses" was indeed a Western plot against Islam, he said.

"We do not fear such threats," he told Majlis deputies in the opening of Tuesday's session. "We are prepared to follow our own path at any cost."

On Monday the European Community foreign ministers meeting in Brussles decided to recall their most senior diplomats from the Iran capital in protest against Imam Khomeyni's fatwah ordering the execution of the Indian-born British author Salman Rushdie.

Britain, where Rushdie is still in hiding a week after the fatwah, said it would recall all five diplomats from its embassy in Tehran.

The Islamic Republic retaliated Tuesday by ordering its senior diplomats in EC countries to return home for consultation.

"The EC decision... is a clear sign which proves claims that the issue of this blasphamous book... is a plot designed by Western imperialism to fight true Islam," Rafsanjani said.

Iran, as the focus of the defence against Islam, would stand firm against the "cultural weapon" of the West and emerge victorious as it did in dispelling accusations that Islamic Iran was a warmonger.

He said the European Community's defence of Rushdie's "insults against the divine values of millions of people" was hypocritical "when the martyrdom of a group of Pakistani and Kashmiri people (protesting against the book) was considered nothing."

At least six Pakistani Muslims died in clashes with the police in Islamabad 9 days ago in a demonstration against the book and its publication in the U.S.

Two days later Imam Khomeyni issued the fatwah against Rushdie's life and in a second fatwah on Sunday stressed that the author could not be pardoned even if he repented.

The imam's fatwah has been supported by the wide majority of Muslims world wide who have been outraged by clear references in "The Satanic Verses" ridiculing and insulting Islam's holiest figures.

Besharati Urges 'Cease-Fire'

LD2102122389 Tehran IRNA in English 1215 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA—A senior Iranian official Tuesday [21 February] warned Western European countries not to engage in an ideological war with Tehran for they would lose in the crisis over the blasphamous novel, "The Satanic Verses".

To avoid "certain defeat", the European Community must accept a "ceasefire", First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati advised.

He thanked countries that had banned the book for its impudent remarks about holy Islamic figures including the prophet (peace be upon him) and said Muslims expected other countries to follow.

But in his commentary published in JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI Tuesday Besharati sharply criticized the Dutch foreign minister for cancelling his trip to Iran and charged that official statements from Spain about the crisis amounted to interference in Iranian affairs.

"And you, Britain, Sweden, Denmark, Italy, Norway and (West) Germany: Don't threaten us. Such threats have always brought positive results for our people and losses for you," Besharati wrote.

"I sincerely advise you to accept a ceasefire in this ideological battle zone, for certain defeat awaits you."

The article seemed to have been written prior to the EC's decision Monday to recall its ambassadors from Iran in defence of "freedom of expression" and in protest against Imam Khomeyni's fatwah calling for the execution of the offending novel's author, Salman Rushdie.

The Islamic Republic has hit back by calling on its ambassadors in the 12-nation community to return to Tehran for consultations.

Besharati said there may be differences on minor issues between Iranian officials but they were united in defending Islam.

"If there are some minor and superficial differences of approach between our officials, be sure that in the defence of Islam's dignity we are all guardians."

"If some of the followers of the revolution had doubts over the continuation of the eight year defence (against Iraqi aggression)... we now have all Muslims on our side in the new front that you have opened," he said.

'Ulema Want To Sever Ties

LD2102065789 Tehran IRNA in English 0652 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA—The combatant 'ulema of Tehran called on the Foreign Ministry to rupture relations with Britain as soon as possible.

In a statement issued Monday the 'ulema condemned the "conspiratorial" publication of Salman Rushdie's slanderous novel "The Satanic Verses" and said "British colonialism and the Great Satan" (U.S.) had played a basic role in insulting Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

They also called on Muslims and the oppressed masses throughout the world to do all within their power to enforce the imam's fatwah (religious decree) which they said was inspired by Islam and in line with all Islamic faiths.

FRG Recalls Charge d'Affaires

LD1702184289 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] While a wave of hatred and revulsion can be observed in the Muslims of the world regarding the conspiracies of world arrogance against Islam and its sanctities, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, ignoring the hurt feelings of one billion Muslims of the world and under the pretext of the religious reaction of the leader of the Islamic revolution to the publisher [as heard] of the obscene book "The Satanic Verses," recalled its charge d'affaires in Tehran today.

IRNA, quoting AFP, reported that the spokesman of the FRG Government said today, while announcing the report about recalling its charge d'affaires in Tehran, the Federal Republic of Germany informed Iran's ambassador in Bonn of its regret over Iran's reaction regarding the issue of Salman Rushdie.

Statement of Students in Europe

NC1802071489 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] The statement by the Union of the Islamic Student's Associations in Europe on the book "Satanic Verses," and the imam's religious decree is the first report of the hour:

The Union of the Islamic Students' Associations in Europe issued a statement declaring that all efforts would be exerted to implement the religious decree calling for the execution of Salman Rushdie. The statement says: Once again the mask has been removed from the faces of the enemies of Islam. The animosity of Zionism and world oppression, spearheaded by the United States, toward Islam has been revealed even to the simple-minded and optimistic ones.

The dissemination of the book "The Satanic Verses," written by Salman Rushdie, in which Islamic sanctities and the Prophet of Islam have been execrated and profaned, is another manifestation of a calculated plan by world oppression against the true religion of Islam. This is because world oppression sees the imminency of its decline in the continuation of the Islamic movements which began in the past decade, and especially following the Islamic revolution, and, consequently, has aimed its arrows directly against Islam.

The statement concludes: We, the members of the Union of the Islamic Students' Associations in Europe will utilize all of our cabilities to obey and to implement the religious decree of the imam of the nation.

Ministers To Discuss Book

LD1802234289 Tehran IRNA in English 1553 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 18, IRNA—The cabinet ministers today urged the Muslim ummah to keep vigilance towards plots of global arrogance and its allies.

Pointing to Salman Rushdie's slanderous novel "The Satanic Verses," the ministers called for a serious encounter by Islamic organisations and governments of Muslim countries to foil the conspiracy.

Minister of the Interior Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi chaired the session in the absence of Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi who is currently in Tabriz (northwestern province of East Azarbayjan) on his way back from a 3-day visit to Turkey.

Karrubi Affirms Death Sentence

LD2002120389 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Excerpts] On the auspicious and blessed birthday of lord of the believers and the emir of the worshippers, His Holiness 'Ali, son of Abi-Taleb, peace be upon him, the families of Tehran martyrs met Imam Khomeyni at his Jamaran residence this morning. [passage omitted] In the course of this meeting Mr Karrubi, the imam's representative and the supervisor of the Martyrs Foundation of the Islamic revolution, offered congratulations to the imam of the ummah on the auspicious birthday of lord of the believers, His Holiness 'Ali, son of Abi-Taleb, peace be upon him, and made the following remarks on the conspiracy of global arrogance against Islam and the Muslims.

[Begin Karrubi recording] Greetings to you dear and honorable audience. We offer congratulations on the auspicious birthday of 'Ali, peace be upon him, this noble man of history, to the Hezbollah ummah, to the lord of the era and the imam of the age, and to the great leader of the revolution, our great imam. On the one hand, global blasphemy, global arrogance is confronting Islam through conspiracy, evil deeds and war-mongering; and on the other hand, through propaganda and cultural work. Such writers as Salman Rushdie are employed to use their pens against Islam and the sanctities of Islam in order to combat the true Islam. His treacherous book is being distributed extensively all over the world. In return, Muslims will rise and revolt. The imam of the ummah issues an order and a fatwah on the killing of this wretched man.

However, global arrogance shamelessly and with utmost impudence creates an adverse climate and spreads propaganda all over the world; and those who themselves are the source of terrorism, crimes, and chaos-mongering and have assassinated thousands of innocent people all over the world present themselves as the defenders of mankind and of human rights. However, they should know that the fatwah remains the same fatwah and the order is the same order as issued by the imam, and no doubt Salman Rushdie and others who follow his line and way of thinking will have no destiny other than death and annihiliation which will take them to hell. [crowd shouts]

The adverse climate created by the arrogant governments, will have no influence on the morale of the Hezbollah ummah, of the Muslims of the whole world, of the dozens who were martyred and rolled in their blood for the sake of this cause. They shall continue their searching and [word indistinct] path with pride and honor. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Qom Clerics To Implement Decree

LD1802135989 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1230 GMT 18 feb 89

[Text] Following his eminence the imam's decree of a revolutionary death sentence for the author and the publishers of the insolent book entitled "The Satanic Verses", the Clerics Mobilization of the Qom seminary have issued a statement expressing their hatred and abhorence toward the despicable action of the United States, the Great Satan, and international Zionism in publishing and distributing this book. Paying tribute to Muslims in India and Pakistan for their courageous action, the clerics have pronounced their full preparedness to implement the absolute decree of the imam.

'Preservance of Beliefs' Urged

LD1802122289 Tehran IRNA in English 1209 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 18, IRNA—Persian daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in an editorial on the West's reaction to Imam Khomeyni's fatwah against the author of "The Satanic Verses" today assured that Iran would always opt for "preservance of beliefs" rather than "diplomatic relations".

"The Muslims are the ones who must reconsider whether to preserve their relations with those who profane Islamic sanctities," the paper stressed.

Referring to the threats made by some Western countries that they would review their relations with Tehran, JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI warned that they should act wisely or regret in the future.

The editorial emphasized that the issue was related to beliefs of one billion Muslims and that the book sacrileged fundamental Islamic sanctities.

It wondered whether the West would opt for safeguarding diplomatic relations with Iran or "shamelessly sacrilege sanctities of the world Muslim community and support its own unjustifiable move."

ETTELA'AT Deplores Bounty

LD1802190689 Tehran IRNA in English 1800 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 18, IRNA—The Persian daily ETTELA'AT in its Saturday issue deplored the setting of a bounty for killing British novelist Salman Rushdie for his fantasy novel "The Satanic Verses" saying to pay one man to kill another man is murder at a premium and not a religiously-inspired act. It said once one person undertakes to put an end to the life of another person for a consideration the act is typical of the dealings of the underworld and not of the saints or religious men.

The daily said for no plausible reason certain real as well as corporate bodies in Iran including the 15th-of-Khordad Foundation had bid independently over and above the previously established one-million-dollars for the killing of the Indian born British novelist which, it said, had increased the bounty to a staggering figure completely overshadowing its religious implications.

ETTELA'AT said if influential businessmen in Iran should be allowed to compete with each other in bidding higher and higher for the head of the British novelist and strive to win reputation for themselves solely because of having offered the highest bounty then it means that the person who will undertake to kill Salman Rushdie will be prompted by a greed for money and not by a religious conscience.

It said since in the Western countries the killing of a man like Salman Rushdie is a capital crime then any person who should happen to actually kill him cannot possibly assume the responsibility for having done so. What is more, it said, Iran's attitude towards the issue should not be allowed to lead others to believe that the persons wishing to kill Salman Rushdie are after money and not anything else.

The daily said though any Muslim might voluntarily offer to put an end to the life of a heretic out of religious duty and without an eye to a bounty whatsoever, the wisest thing for the Islamic Republic in all such cases would be to ensure that religious conscience will prevail over the quest for material gains.

In Friday congregational prayers in Tehran, President Khamene'i said to a massive group of worshippers at the compounds of Tehran University yesterday that if Rushdie should choose to repent and apologize to Muslims for his novel "The Satanic Verses" then Iran's Muslim people will most likely forgive him.

On Sunday [as received] Salman Rushdie, in hiding since since the order for his killing was issued by Imam Khomeyni, offered a mild apology in a statement to world Muslims saying "I profoundly regret the distress the publication has occasioned to sincere followers of Islam."

The statement, though far too short of a repentence, is generally seen as sufficient enough to warrant his pardon by the masses in Iran and elsewhere in the world.

Writer's 'Personal Observation'

LD1802202989 Tehran IRNA in English 2015 GMT 18 Feb 89

["Editors Are Recommended: Re IRNA's Saturday Dispatch on Salman Rushdie"—IRNA headline]

[Text], Tehran, Feb. 18, IRNA—Please note that the last paragraph of the referenced dispatch was in fact the personal observation of the copy writer, and that it does not allow for any specific interpretation whatsoever.

Papers Give Limited Coverage

LD1902164289 Tehran IRNA in English 1636 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 19, IRNA—Salman Rushdie's apology for what he called the "genuine distress" caused by his blasphemous book "The Satanic Verses" had limited coverage Sunday in national newspapers which showed less interest in the whole affair.

Four of the five Persian language dailies carried Rushdie's statement but only two on their front page and only in small print.

RESALAT was the only paper to give prominence to Rushdie's apology in its front page and in an editorial said the imam's fatwah would be carried out, though "the way was still open for real repentance and to reform the signs of this crime ('The Satanic Verses')."

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI headlined on its front page declarations by Muslims from various parts of the world to carry out the execution order against Rushdie but mentioned Rushdie's apology in small print.

Its report on the latest developments on the top of page three began with Rushdie's statement made on Saturday but the paper added that the author "had not shown any sign of repentance or whether he would withdraw the book."

KEYHAN's front page headline focused on the condemnation of the "The Satanic Verses" by the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the author's regret was reflected in small print.

The story dropped from the front pages of ETTELA'AT and ABRAR altogether, except for a brief mention in the latter's front page.

In its editorial, RESALAT said the West must change the way it analysed Iranian policy.

"Westerners need a new method to understand and analyse the religious position of our leadership and people, and the diplomatic position of our government, before being able to, or wanting to, stop or control the consequences of (the imam's) order," it said.

The West was only trying to respond to the fatwah by reacting against the Iranian Government, not knowing that this would not eliminate the fatwa or its consequences, RESALAT said.

Khamene'i Says Relations With E. Europe Improving

LD2002091788 Tehran IRNA in English 0910 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 20, IRNA—President 'Ali Khamene'i said today that he would discuss expansion of political, economic, industrial and cultural ties as well as international topics with leaders of Yugoslavia and Romania during his five day visit to the two countries.

Speaking to reporters minutes before flying to Belgrade on the first leg of his first European tour, the president added he would also try to draw a clear picture of the Islamic revolution and the policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in his talks with Yugoslav and Romanian leaders.

Iran's relations with Eastern Europe has improved after the victory of the 1979 Islamic revolution, and "we have given a positive response to their willingness to expand political and economic relations with Iran," President Khamene'i said.

On the recent reforms in the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries and their impact on Iran's ties with these countries the president termed the changes as "positive" and said "these changes will certainly influence mutual relations."

Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Economic and Finance Minister Mohammad Javad Iravani, Acting Commerce Minister 'Abdol Hoseyn Vahaji, as well as several deputy ministers and Majlis deputies are accompanying the president in his tour.

Heads Delegation to Belgrade

LD2002074289 Tehran IRNA in English 0739 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 20, IRNA—Iranian President 'Ali Khamene'i left here for Belgrade, Yugoslavia, this morning on the first leg of his visit to Europe, the first ever by an Iranian president after the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Economic and Finance Minister Mohammad Javad Iravani and several deputy ministers are accompanying the president in the three-day visit.

Tehran-Belgrade relations have improved in recent years and last year foreign ministers of the two countries visited each other's capitals.

Talks between the two presidents are expected to focus on mutual relations and international issues. Bilateral trade between the two countries, both members of Non-Aligned Movement, stood at about dlrs. 256 million in 1987 with Iran's share dlrs. 60 million more than Yugoslavia.

Soviet Envoy Issues Warning to Afghan Mujahidin

LD1802152689 Tehran IRNA in English 1512 GMT 18 Feb 89

[By Ahmad Reza Ra'na]

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 18, IRNA—The Soviet ambassador today warned the Afghan mujahidin that they had two alternatives, either to share power with the present Kabul regime or get ready for a direct confrontation with it.

Vladimir V. Gudev also maintained that best way to solve the Afghan issue is direct talks between the Mujahidin and the ruling regime in Kabul, and reiterated "it is naivety to suppose the Kabul government would be toppled by opposition groups."

In an interview with IRNA at the Soviet Embassy, Gudev said the Kabul regime which he claimed was representing the majority of Afghan people, possessed necessary means to maintain its rule including a strong army.

The interview coincided with news reports that President Najibullah has declared a state of national emergency today.

Gudev believes the ruling party in Kabul has 200,000 members ready to take up arms to "defend their ideals", and according to him tens of thousands of the party members carrying arms staged a rally in Kabul a few days ago to display "determination" to defend their causes.

Last week, trying to put on a show of strength, the Soviet installed Najiubllah had ordered 30,000 ordinary Afghans in Kabul to be issued arms to defend against the mujahidin the beseiged capital which is expected to fall any moment in the wake of the Russian withdrawal. [sentence as received]

After nine-long years of occupation Soviet troops under a U.N. sponsored accord started withdrawing from the Muslim state in various stages the last of which took place last week.

The Soviet ambassador seemed not to relish the idea of a dramatic mujahidin victory and thought that insistance of certain Afghan mujahidin groups on taking power by force might cause more people to fall victims. "They (these mujahidin groups) do not want to accept existing realities." However he added "issues they (mujahidin) want to solve by force can all be solved through negotiations."

But Gudev offered no comments on the severe setbacks suffered by the Soviet and their proxies the Kabul regime troops over the past decade.

Asked about Moscow's stance on the Iran-Iraq peace talks and the 1975 accord, he replied that his country was exploring all its possibilities, credibility and prestige to extinguish the flames of the war.

"Moscow favors full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 598 including the troop withdrawal and exchange of POW's," he said.

The 1975 accord concerns only Iran and Iraq said the Soviet ambassador and thought "what is more important is they could reach peace and stability in the region."

Envoy to Moscow Warns of 'Agents' in Mujahidin

LD1902134489 Tehran IRNA in English 1316 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 19, IRNA—Afghan mujahidin were once again urged by an Iranian newspaper and Iranian officials to put aside their differences and beware that the struggle for power in Afghanistan was not over yet.

"All combatant mujahidin forces must see this fact that the Marxist Kabul regime is still breathing and active," JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI said in an editorial Sunday [19 February].

"Any kind of false optimism at this point in time would be harmful and the people of Afghanistan must not be unconscious of the fact that they have not made a consolidated achievement," it pointed out.

Meanwhile Deputy Foreign Minister Javad Mansuri in an interview with THE TEHRAN TIMES said mujahidin could foil plots by their foreign enemies with "unity and alertness"

Afghan President Najibullah announced measures aimed at strengthening his hold on power Saturday three days after the Soviet troops ended their presence in the country.

A state of emergency was declared throughout the country and seven Cabinet members were replaced.

The moves inside Afghanistan took shape as sharp differences between the mujahidin over their future interim government continued.

On Saturday Sibghatullah Mojadeddi resigned as leader of the Pakistan-based Afghan mujahidin alliance after failing to convince rivals to agree to the provision of a greater number of seats to Iran-based groups in the mujahidin's Consultative Council, or Shura.

But Mojadeddi said cabinet seats would be set aside for the Iran-based mujahidin who boycotted the Shura and left Islamabad for Tehran Saturday.

Iran's ambassador to Moscow, Naser Heyrani-Nobari told the daily ETTELA'AT Sunday "total unity is the most important need" of the resistance groups.

But there was "reliable information" that U.S. sympathisers were infiltrating the ranks of the mujahidin under the guise of radicals, he added.

He criticized the rejection of an agreement between the leaders of Iran and Pakistan-based groups concerning the representation of the Iran-based groups in the Shura and said if necessary, Iran would "unveil infiltrating American agents to the brave Afghan people."

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI stressed that the future of Afghanistan would be determined in the coming days and the mujahidin's unity and understanding was the only key to the victory of the resistance forces.

"There is only one way to consolidate the valuable achievements in the struggle of the Afghan people: well-intentions, understanding among all mujahidin forces and the entire Afghan nation."

Relations 'on Sound Footing'

LD1902154289 Tehran IRNA in English 1535 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 19, IRNA—Despite all ups and downs Tehran-Moscow relations are "on a sound footing", Iran's Ambassador Naser Heyrani-Nobari has said.

"With the last Soviet soldier out of Afghanistan (Feb. 15) and cease-fire holding out in the Iraqi war, necessary grounds have been prepared for basic changes in Irano-Soviet multilateral ties," Heyrani-Nobari told the Persian daily ETTELA'AT in an exclusive interview published today.

Asked the basis for Moscow's relations with Iran and Iraq, and whether it would have equal ties with both countries, Heyrani-Nobari said the Russians had greatly blundered by backing Baghdad in its aggression "the outcome of which has come to light with the emergence of new regional equations."

For example, he cited Iraq's lining up with Egypt, Jordan and North Yemen with "an eye to lead the new axis," which however he said would eventually turn out to be sheer fancy for Baghdad "a reactionary subordinate."

"The fact is" said Heyrani-Nobari "Iran is a key power in the region" and at the same time one of the Soviet Union's largest neighbours. "Ignorance of these basic factors about Iran could be even bigger mistake for the Soviets, although they have told us they are after rectifying their previous shortcomings in this regard," he added.

On Imam Khomeyni's unprecendented epistle to Soviet leader Mikhel Gorbachev, Heyrani-Nobari said the historic message was studied and analysed in a meeting of the Soviet Politburo, and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze is expected in Iran next week with Gorbachev's response, which "he has asked for delivering it to Imam Khomeyni personally."

Last January the leader of the Islamic revolution sent a historic message to Gorbachev inviting him to study the dynamism of Islam as a substitute for communism, which the imam added "should hence forth be looked for in museums of political history."

The USSR has a 60 million plus Muslim population and the imam lauded the current atmosphere in Soviet Union "after 70 years of suppression and a futile war against God and religion."

Heyrani-Nobari, questioned on the prospect of mutual relations "at all levels and in all areas," answered that since two major problems—the Iraqi war and the Afghan issue—have subsided, grounds for expansion of bilateral ties have practically been prepared. "Eduard Shevardnadze's coming visit to Iran carries added importance," he said.

Pakistan

Further on Visit by Turkish President Evren

Speaks at Banquet

BK1702050589 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and President Kenan Evren have stressed the need for concrete efforts toward establishing a broad-based government in Kabul in order to create peaceful conditions for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. The two heads of state were speaking at a banquet that President Ghulam Ishaq Khan hosted in honor of the distinguished guest.

Ghulam Ishaq Khan said the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan will mark the beginning of a new era of peace, harmony, and prosperity in that country and will enable the Afghan people to use all their energy to reconstruct their country in an atmosphere of peace and harmony. The Afghan people must take advantage of the historic opportunity to have the independent, Islamic, and nonaligned identity of Afghanistan restored. Pakistan will continue to support the Afghan brethren in the era of their victory and success as it did during the period of their hardships and tribulation.

The Pakistani president reaffirmed Pakistan's determination to strictly adhere to the policy of establishing normal friendly relations with all its neighbors. Pakistan will continue its support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people. Israel should accept the right of the Palestinians to establish their own state, the president observed.

Ghulam Ishaq Khan said the Pakistan-Turkey friendship is deep-rooted and has withstood every test of time. Our relationship is based on our common cultural heritage, spiritual values, and goals, he noted.

The president reaffirmed Pakistan's support of Turkey in connection with the status of the Turkish Muslim minority in Bulgaria, and said a lasting solution to the Cyprus problem can be found only when the equal rights of the Turkish community in northern Cyprus are recognized.

Ghulam Ishaq Khan said the Turkish president is visiting Pakistan at a time when the elected popular government and representatives are strengthening the democratic institutions in the country. The president expressed the confidence that, under the leadership of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, the government and people of the country will devote all their energy toward building a strong, prosperous, and developed Pakistan.

Turkish President Kenan Evren expressed satisfaction at the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and hoped that concrete efforts will be made for the reconstruction of Afghanistan under the supervision of a broad-based administration. Turkey will provide every possible assistance for this purpose. Kenan Evren appreciated Pakistani efforts for a peaceful settlement of the Afghan problem and for providing shelter to over 3 million Afghan nationals on its soil for several years.

The Turkish president welcomed the restoration of democracy in Pakistan and prayed for the progress and prosperity of the people. He made specific mention of the role played by the president during the general elections in Pakistan. Kenan Evren noted that, by assuming the office of prime minister, Benazir Bhutto has fulfilled the expectations that the great leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah had for Pakistani women.

The Turkish president said Pakistan and Turkey share identical views on various international issues, and with the changes taking place in international affairs, the further promotion of friendship and cooperation between the two countries is all the more necessary. He thanked Pakistan for its support on the Cyprus issue and also for its support for Turk Muslims in Bulgaria.

The Turkish president expressed the hope that the recent talks between the prime ministers of Pakistan and India will mark the beginning of a new era of cooperation between the two countries.

The Turkish president met President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in Islamabad yesterday evening and discussed with him matters relating to ways and means of increasing bilateral cooperation, especially in economic fields and in regional and international affairs. The governments of the two countries, they agreed, should also sincerely strive to develop their bilateral economic ties and cooperation in order to meet the level of their deep relationship in the political field. The two countries can benefit immensely from each other's experiences in the field of development, the two presidents noted.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was also present on the occasion.

Talks With Yaqub Khan

BK1702133889 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1300 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Pakistan and Turkey have identified new areas of cooperation in joint ventures, particularly, in the fields of petrochemicals, electronics, and telecommunications industries. This was agreed during talks between the foreign ministers of Pakistan and Turkey—Sahabzada Yaqub Khan and Mr Mesut Yilmaz—in Islamabad today. The talks, which were held in a cordial atmosphere, focused on bilateral issues.

The two foreign ministers also reviewed regional and international issues with particular reference to the evolving situation in Afghanistan. The cooperation among Pakistan, Turkey, and Iran within the framework of the Economic Cooperation Organization also came under discussion.

Discusses Issues With Bhutto

BK1802035289 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto called on Turkish President Kenan Evren in Rawalpindi yesterday evening. Both leaders exchanged views on bilateral ties and regional issues of mutual interest. They expressed total satisfaction with the friendly relations existing between the two countries and also expressed their determination to take all possible steps in promoting these relations further in cultural, social, and other fields.

The prime minister apprised the Turkish president of the current situation in Afghanistan. There was complete accord in the views of the two countries for setting up a broad-based government in Afghanistan to stop further bloodshed and to restore peace and stability there.

Benazir Bhutto informed the Turkish president about the recent SAARC summit held in Pakistan. Bhutto also apprised him of current Pakistan-India relations.

The Turkish president discussed with the Pakistani prime minister the Cyprus issue and the nature of Greek-Turkish relations. The prime minister then hosted a dinner in honor of Kenan Evren.

Earlier, Senate Chairman Wasim Sajjad and National Assembly Speaker Malik Mairaj Khalid had separate meetings with the Turkish president and informed him of the performance of the houses of Parliament.

Feted by Ishaq Khan

BK1902043089 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and his wife hosted a dinner in honor of Turkish President Kenan Evren and his daughter in Islamabad last night. The dinner was attended by the foreign ministers of Pakistan and Turkey, among others.

Departs for Malaysia 19 Feb

BK1902070389 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0600 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Turkish President Kenan Evren was given a warm sendoff when he left Islamabad for Kuala Lumpur this morning after a 4-day official visit to Pakistan. He was seen off at the airport by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

Upon departing, President Kenan Evren thanked President Ghulam Ishaq Khan for the distinguished reception accorded to him and the members of his delegation and for the excellent hospitality shown to them. He described the talks during his stay in Pakistan as most satisfactory and said that they were held in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and goodwill. This reflects the strong bonds of friendship between the two countries, he said.

Maritime, Tourism Agreements Signed With Turkey

BK1902042089 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Pakistan and Turkey have signed two bilateral cooperation agreements in Islamabad in the fields of maritime transport and tourism. The maritime transport agreement envisages promotion of bilateral trade, cooperation in shipbuilding—repairs and preparation and improvement of designs, and a provision for machinery, implements, and spare parts.

Under the tourism agreement both countries will launch a joint campaign for participation in the international market and will arrange training courses for employees in the public and private sectors in various fields of specialization. With the cooperation of Pakistan International Airlines and the Turkish airlines, both countries will jointly make efforts to encourage visits to foreign countries. A joint commission on tourism will implement this agreement.

'Text' of Joint Statement With USSR

BK2002114589 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 7 Feb 89 p 1,8

["Text" of joint statement issued at the end of a visit by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to Pakistan, dated 6 Feb]

[Text] Islamabad, Feb. 6—Following is the text of the Soviet-Pakistan joint statement, issued at the end of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's visit to Pakistan, at the invitation of His Excellency, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. His Excellency Eduard Shevardnadze, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and Foreign Minister of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, paid a working visit to Pakistan on Feb. 5-6, 1989.

Mr. Shevardnadze was received by the President of Pakistan His Excellency Ghulam Ishaq Khan and had a meeting with Her Excellency Benazir Bhutto, the Prime Minister of Pakistan. He also had two rounds of talks with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan.

The two sides discussed international and regional issues of mutual interest, in particular the situation relating to Afghanistan. They also reviewed the existing state bilateral relations and discussed ways and means to further expand mutually beneficial cooperation in the economic, cultural and technical fields.

With regard to the situation in Afghanistan the two sides agreed that every effort should be made to promote a political settlement in Afghanistan in order to bring peace and tranquillity to the Afghan people and to put an end to the protracted conflict which has prevailed in Afghanistan for the past several years.

The ministers believe that the military path can only lead to a worsening of the situation in Afghanistan which would result in further loss of life and destruction throughout the country. A political settlement is the only way to prevent this.

The two sides reiterated their intention to encourage the establishment in Afghanistan of a broad-based government which should be formed through the efforts of the Afghans themselves and would reflect their right to determine their own future and their political and economic institutions without any outside interference. Both sides also reiterated their support for a sovereign, independent and non-aligned Afghhanistan enjoying good relations with all its neighbours.

In this context the two sides emphasised the importance of the resolution on Afghanistan, unanimously adopted at the 43rd session of the UN General Assembly which reflects the common will of all countries of the world. In their view, everything must be done for an unconditional implementation of that resolution.

The Pakistan side noted the steps undertaken by the Soviet Union in order to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan and welcomed the assurances that the withdrawals would be completed by Feb. 15, 1989. In the interest of an Afghhan settlement both sides reiterated their commitment to faithfully observe the provisions of the Geneva Accords.

In considering specific issues regarding the situation in Afghanistan, the ministers examined the problem of repatriation of Afghan refugees, the majority of whom were in the territory of Pakistan. They noted the need to create conditions that would enable all refugees to return to their homes in safety and to live in peace.

Special attention was given to the problem of supplying the population of Afghanistan with food and other needed commodities so as to alleviate their suffering. The ministers noted with satisfaction the efforts undertaken in this regard by the United Nations within the framework of its programme of economic and humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan.

With regard to bilateral relations, the two sides undertook a review of the existing level of bilateral cooperation in the economic, scientific and cultural fields and decided to take a number of steps for this purpose.

It was agreed to expedite the establishment of a joint ministerial commission for the promotion of bilateral cooperation in a number of fields.

The two sides also discussed cooperation with respect to projects in the fields of steel and machine-tool production, power generation and mining.

The ministers agreed that the foreign ministries of the two countries would hold regular consultations on various subjects of mutual interest. These consultations would be held alternately in Islamabad and Moscow.

Foreign Minister Makes Policy Statement

BK2002160889 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan told the National Assembly this evening that the country's foreign policy will, as usual, continue to be based on our national interests, democratic values, recognized international principles, and on the UN Charter. Giving a statement in the House on important developments that have taken place during past few months in connection with the country's foreign policy, he said safeguarding national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence will continue to remain supreme above all things. The country's honor and dignity will not be compromised. The foreign minister assured the House that there has been no change in this policy and Pakistan will not accept any [word indistinct] to bring about a change in this policy.

About Afghanistan, the foreign minister said the total withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan is a great tribute to the courage and valor of the Afghan people. Pakistan has never flinched from its principled stand on the Afghan issue as well as from its position to settle this problem through negotiations; and that is why Islamabad has been successful in mobilizing the support of the international community. Pakistan has encouraged the establishment of a broad-based government to replace the Kabul regime so that peace may be restored to Afghanistan and the Afghan people may be able to return to their homeland in safety, he added.

Referring to the successful holding of the SAARC summit conference in December last year, the foreign minister said this reflects Pakistan's determination to have purposeful and constructive cooperation with South Asian countries.

Replying to the objections by some members of parliament regarding the allegation of India's domination over the SAARC summit conference, Yaqub Khan said all decisions in this organization are made through consensus and on the basis of equality.

About Benazir Bhutto's talks with the Indian prime minister, the foreign minister said these talks were held in a cordial atmosphere. The prime minister clearly stated Pakistan's principled stand on Jammu and Kashmir, which has been recognized as an outstanding issue in the Simla Agreement. The Simla Agreement has stressed the need for a peaceful solution to this issue for the establishment of lasting peace between the two countries. He assured the House that the Jammu and Kashmir problem will always remain as a basic issue in Pakistan's relations with India, and Islamabad is determined to seek a just solution to this problem.

About the Siachen Glacier issue, the foreign minister said a meeting of the defense secretaries of the two countries will be held next month to discuss ways to find a just solution to this problem.

Sahabzada Yaqub Khan reiterated that Pakistan's nuclear program is for peaceful purposes and Islamabad does not intend to acquire or manufacture a nuclear weapon.

Religious Leader Rejects Rushdie's Apology

BK1802155589 Hong Kong AFP in English 1531 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 18 (AFP)—Pakistan's religious leader Mawlana Kausar Niazi said Saturday that British novelist Salman Rushdie's apology for distress caused by his book "The Satanic Verses" was not enough unless he withdrew all copies of the book.

Mr. Rushdie would also have to donate all the royalties earned from the novel to Moslem charitable organisations in the United Kingdom, Mr. Niazi said.

Mr. Niazi, who called a rally last week to condemn the U.S. publication of the book, said that if Mr. Rushdie called himself a Moslem "then he should seek pardon from God, which is an Islamic ritual, and promise to behave the rest of his life."

"Only then he could be forgiven."

Six people were killed here last week in a demonstration against the book after police shot at protesters. Mr. Niazi was one of about 100 people injured in the demonstration.

After withdrawing all copies of the book, Mr. Rushdie "has to burn them down" and donate all the profits gathered by sale of the "blasphemous" book, Mr. Niazi said. Moslems throughout the world have condemned the novel as blaspheming Islam.

Mr. Rushdie apologized Saturday in London for the injury his work may have caused to Moslems following several threats on his life. Iranian religious leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni called Tuesday for Mr. Rushdie to be killed for "offending Islam", and an Iranian cleric and a group of businessmen offered rewards of up to six million dollars for his killing.

Embassies Warned of Possible Sikh Attack

BK1802113089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1118 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 18 (AFP)—Pakistan has warned its diplomatic missions abroad to take precautionary measures following a threat by a Sikh extremist group against the Pakistani Embassy in New Delhi, the ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN (APP) said Saturday [18 February].

Islamabad alerted all its embassies and missions to take measures against possible acts of sabotage by the extremists, APP said.

The group told the embassy in New Delhi that it would carry out acts of sabotage within and outside Pakistan against Pakistan-related agencies and interests, the official agency said.

India has accused Pakistan of supporting Sikh extremists in the neighboring Indian province of Punjab, a charge denied by Islamabad.

The Sikhs have said that any alleged support would end with the newly-elected government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

Army Chief General Beg Departs for U.S. 19 Feb

BK2002130689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1928 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 19 (AFP)—Pakistani Army Chief General Mirza Aslam Beg left Sunday for Washington where he was to begin a 16-day official visit to the United States, Defence Ministry sources said.

No details of the trip were given but observers expected it to include discussions on defence matters and the situation in Afghanistan. The Pakistani Army relies mostly on U.S.-supplied weapons.

The visit, Gen. Beg's first since becoming Army chief after the death in August of President Mohammed Ziaul Haq, follows Wednesday's completion of the Soviet troop pullout from Afghanistan under U.N.-brokered peace accords.

Washington along with Moscow was a signatory to the accords signed in Geneva last april by Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Pakistan and the United States both support the Afghan resistance against the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul. Gen. Beg was scheduled to fly to Washington via London.

Saudi Arabia To Aid Defense Production Program

BK2002110589 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Pakistan says Saudi Arabia has agreed to assist Islamabad's defense production program in a big way. The minister of state for defense, Mr Ghulam Sarwar Cheema, disclosed this to newsmen in Islamabad after his return from Saudi Arabia.

Reports say, Pakistan has been seeking Saudi assistance to purchase combat planes, P-3 Airborne Early Warning Aircraft, and F-16 Falcon planes.

Saudi Arabia reportedly ceased aid to Islamabad after Pakistan withdrew 1 lakh troops from international security duties in Saudi Arabia last year.